National Aeronautics and Space Administration

STYLEBOOK and COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL

With appendices providing guidelines for:

- RELEASE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION
- ALL COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS
- NASA RELEASES & ADVISORIES
- CONTRACT AWARD RELEASES
- WEB ARTICLES
- IMAGE CAPTIONS
- NASA TV VIDEO FILES
- BEST PRACTICES
- SOCIAL MEDIA

Office of Communications

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STYLEBOOK

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Style Notes

AP Style
All materials issued from NASA's communications offices should conform to the Associated Press Stylebook, except for the deviations included in this NASA Stylebook. This guide is intended as a supplement. For items not covered in the AP Stylebook or this guide, consult Webster's New World College Dictionary.

When companies, groups or organizations' preferred name differs from AP Style, such as Sierra Nevada Corporation (vs. Sierra Nevada Corp.), typically NASA will defer to the company, group or organization's preference.

NASA also breaks from AP style related to using an acronym when the full name only is spelled out once. If the acronym is more widely known than what it spells out, the acronym should be used once for clarity. See abbreviations and acronyms for more information.

Capitalization
If the term is capitalized in this guide, it should be capitalized. If lowercase in this stylebook, it should be lowercase. Exceptions are noted with the entry.

Punctuation and Symbols
Unless otherwise stated in this stylebook, consult the AP Stylebook's punctuation guide. Use punctuation to clarify the thoughts being expressed. Keep sentences short and concise. Limit series with semicolons. Rephrase if necessary.

Headlines
Use single quotes in headlines, per AP. Headlines should be in title case. See headlines for more information

e.g. and i.e.
i.e. is an abbreviation for the Latin phrase *id est*, which means "that is." In common usage, it's translated as "that is to say" or "in other words." Do not confuse i.e. with e.g., which is an abbreviation for the Latin phrase *exempli gratia*, which means "for the sake of example." In common usage, it's translated simply as "for example." Both i.e. and e.g. should be followed by a comma.

Telephone Numbers
AP style is with hyphens. *For more information, call the NASA Headquarters newsroom at 202-358-1600*. For international numbers, insert the country code and, if applicable, the city code in parenthesis, such as (44-20) 7353-1515.

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Communications Priorities

Flight
NASA is With You When You Fly.
Every U.S. aircraft and air traffic control tower uses NASA-developed technology. We're committed to transforming aviation by reducing its environmental impact, maintaining safety, and revolutionizing aircraft shapes and propulsion.

Earth
NASA Earth: Your Home. Our Mission.
For more than five decades, NASA has used the vantage point of space to understand and explore our home planet, improve lives and safeguard our future. NASA brings together technology, science, and unique global Earth observations to provide societal benefits and strengthen our nation. Advancing knowledge of our home planet contributes directly to America’s leadership in space and scientific exploration.

Humans in Space
Working Off the Earth, For the Earth.
The International Space Station is a blueprint for global cooperation and scientific advancements, a destination for growing a commercial marketplace in low-Earth orbit, and a test bed for demonstrating new technologies. The space station is the springboard to NASA's next great leap in exploration, including future missions to an asteroid and Mars.

Moon to Mars
The Moon Lights the Way.
NASA is called to land American astronauts, including the first woman and the next man, on the Moon by 2024. Through the Artemis lunar exploration program, NASA will go to the Moon in a way we have never gone before. Using what we learn on and around the Moon, we will to take the next giant leap – sending astronauts to Mars.

Solar System and Beyond
NASA: We're Out There
NASA's exploration spans the universe. Observing the Sun and its effects on Earth. Delving deep into our solar system. Looking beyond to worlds around other stars. Probing the mysterious structures and origins of our universe. Everywhere imaginable, NASA is out there.

Space Technology
Technology Drives Exploration.
We develop, test and fly transformative capabilities and cutting edge exploration technologies. Our technology development provides the onramp for new ideas, maturing them from early stage through flight and giving wings to the innovation economy.

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#

3D
The common abbreviation used for the term three dimensional. Use without a hyphen, per AP. *The first 3D printing in space was done aboard the International Space Station.*

A

abbreviations and acronyms
Avoid overuse. If a term is more widely known by its acronym, such as SOFIA and MESSENGER, spell it out on first reference. Then use the acronym. If a name is used only once or twice in a release, the acronym is not necessary. The abbreviation or acronym should be included once IF it will help the public and media understand issues in news conferences and mission commentary, or if the acronym is more widely used than what it spells out.

Agency centers and facilities never should be referred to with abbreviations, with the exception of JPL. See center names for more. Do not abbreviate International Space Station. See International Space Station for more.

Do not mix use of upper- and lowercase letters in an acronym, unless that is how a mission commonly IS known (e.g., OSIRIS-REx). Per AP, omit periods in acronyms unless the result would spell an unrelated word. But use periods in two-letter abbreviations. Use all caps, but no periods, in longer abbreviations and acronyms for which the individual letters are pronounced, e.g., ABC, CIA, FBI. Use only an initial cap and then lowercase for acronyms of more than six letters, unless otherwise in the AP Stylebook, Webster's New World College Dictionary or certain NASA missions, such as MESSENGER.

aboard vs. onboard
Aboard and onboard mean almost the same thing, but the preferred term is aboard. The term onboard may be used as an adjective to refer to something carried within or occurring aboard a vehicle – e.g., an onboard guidance system. Avoid use of on board as a noun.

administrator
Capitalize only when used before a name, per AP. NASA Administrator James Webb will lead the briefing.

Advanced Air Mobility
The term that describes NASA's overall aeronautics research to help emerging aviation markets safely develop an air transportation system that moves people and cargo using revolutionary new aircraft that are only just now becoming possible. Such a system will serve areas from small country towns to the largest metropolitan areas. AAM is acceptable on second reference.

Note that many within industry refer to this same idea as Urban Air Mobility, or UAM. NASA has chosen to embrace the term Advanced Air Mobility as it is more inclusive of the various populated environments these new aircraft will fly over. In NASA's view, UAM is part of AAM.

aeronautics
The study of all things related to flight, including the science of designing, constructing, and operating an aircraft – including air traffic management.

aft
At, near or toward the rearmost part of a ship or tail of an aircraft. Prefer *tail* or *rear*.

agency
Never capitalize agency when it stands alone. NASA awarded a contract to The Boeing Co. The agency released details during a news conference.

agencywide
No hyphen

airborne
Supported only by aerodynamic forces; aloft or flying.

ATK – Alliant Techsystems
Acquired by Orbital; see Orbital ATK.

altitude
Height expressed in units of distance above a reference plane, usually above mean sea level or above ground.

Ames, Joseph S. Ames Research Center
Standard use is NASA's Ames Research Center. Dateline is Silicon Valley, California.

ampersand
Per AP, use the ampersand when it is part of a company's formal name, such as Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. The ampersand should not be used in place of and.

angstroms
Do not capitalize.

Apollo mission numbers
Use Arabic numerals instead of Roman numerals – e.g., Apollo 11

Applied Physics Laboratory
Located in Laurel, Maryland. It is a not-for-profit center for engineering, research and development and is a division of Johns Hopkins University.

approach
The final phase of a typical flight in which an aircraft is descending from its cruising altitude and slowing as it nears the airport.

Arabic numerals
Arabic numerals should be used in most cases for clarity, unless Roman numerals are part of a formal name, such as the Saturn V, Delta IV or Atlas V rockets.

arc jet
Lowercase, unless used in proper noun. *The Arc Jet Complex is located at NASA's Ames Research Center in Silicon Valley, California*.

arctic
Lowercase for the adjective meaning frigid; capitalize for the region around the North Pole. Also Arctic Circle, arctic fox, Arctic Ocean.

Armstrong, Neil A. Armstrong Flight Research Center
Standard use is NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center. It was officially renamed March 1, 2014, from Dryden Flight Research Center. The center's Western Aeronautical Test Range also was renamed to the Hugh L. Dryden Aeronautical Test Range. Dateline is Edwards, California. Armstrong is located on Edwards Air Force Base but is not a part of the base. Because Armstrong is located wholly within the boundary of Edwards, access is through property and gates controlled by the Air Force.

Artemis Base Camp
NASA is interested in developing a long-term presence at the Moon's South Pole. Minimal external use of Artemis Base Camp is preferred. Emphasis should be more about general sustainable exploration and capabilities rather than highlighting a specific base camp concept.

Artemis Generation
For branding purposes, capitalize Artemis and Generation.

Artemis program
Artemis is the twin sister of Apollo, and the name of NASA's lunar exploration program. Capitalize Artemis, but not program. Scope includes all lunar activities including return humans to the Moon by 2024 and establishing sustainable lunar exploration by 2028.

Artemis I
This is the first integrated launch of the Orion spacecraft and the Space Launch System rocket. Use Roman numerals to designate each Artemis mission. When describing this mission its best to use plain language as the "first test flight of the Space Launch System," the "first integrated flight of the Space Launch System rocket and Orion spacecraft" and/or the "first flight test beyond the Moon."

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Artemis II
The first SLS and Orion test flight of a mission around the Moon with crew.

Artemis III
NASA will send astronauts, including the first woman and next man, on a mission to the surface of the Moon by 2024.

artist's conception and artist's concept
Do not use artist's conception or artist's concept. Use illustration.

astronaut
Per AP, this is not a formal title and should not be capitalized before a name. NASA astronauts fly. NASA astronaut Joe Acaba flies.

astronaut candidate
Use the full term, in lowercase, to refer to those individuals who have been selected by NASA as candidates for the NASA astronaut corps and are currently undergoing a candidacy training program at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Do not use the abbreviated form of ascan.

astronaut names
It is standard to include a pronunciation guide for any astronaut's name that is or could be difficult to pronounce. For example: Oleg Novitsky (OH-leg NO-vit-skee), Flight Engineer with Roscosmos

The first time the crew is introduced in a release or online, use their full titles, including military rank and affiliation, and full names. In later media products, simply use the astronaut's preferred name on first reference and last name on second reference in the same document, per AP style. In photo captions, treat each photo as a first reference and use the full name and title.

atmosphere
The gaseous or air portion of the physical environment that completely envelops a planet and is held in place by the planet's gravity. The divisions of Earth's atmosphere, from the ground up, include the troposphere, stratosphere, mesosphere, thermosphere (including the ionosphere) and the exosphere. The tropopause is the layer between the troposphere and stratosphere.

More general terms of lower atmosphere, middle atmosphere and upper atmosphere are sometimes used, though exact definitions vary. Middle atmosphere has sometimes been used to include stratosphere and mesosphere, while the Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite (UARS, launched in 1992) focused on stratosphere and mesosphere, with at least one instrument focused on thermosphere. Generally, the upper atmosphere extends to well above 30 miles (48 km).

attitude
The position of an aircraft or spacecraft as determined by the relationship between its axes and a reference object, such as the horizon. The inclination of the three principal axes of an aircraft relative to the wind, to the ground, etc.

aurora (singular), auroras (plural)

Automated Transfer Vehicle
The European Space Agency developed these autonomous vehicles that can supply the International Space Station with propellant, water, air, payload and experiments, and boost the station into higher orbit. Avoid use of the abbreviation ATV. The first Automated Transfer Vehicle, known as the Jules Verne, docked with the International Space Station on April 3, 2008.

avionics
A term describing the electronic systems used in aircraft, spacecraft, and rockets for managing tasks such as communications, navigation, life support, and propulsion. Avionics includes electrically powered hardware such as computers and display screens.

B

Baikonur
The Baikonur Cosmodrome is in Kazakhstan.

Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.
Its dateline is Boulder, Colorado, where it is headquartered.

big-bang theory
The theory that the universe started out in a super-dense primeval state and has been expanding ever since. Used without the word theory, it is big bang, lowercase and no hyphen.

Boeing
The Boeing Co. Its dateline is Chicago, where it is headquartered.

bow
The front end of a ship.

British National Space Centre
Avoid abbreviating, but, if necessary, abbreviate to BNSC.

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C

Canadian Space Agency
Avoid abbreviating, but, if necessary, abbreviate to CSA.

Cape Canaveral
Cape Canaveral is a geographical feature on the east coast of Florida that is home to NASA's Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. The Associated Press uses Cape Canaveral as its dateline locator for stories originating from Kennedy. Note that with the creation of the U.S. Space Force, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station's name is scheduled to be changed to Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

capsule communicator
Generally, the only person who communicates directly with a space crew. On second reference, capcom is acceptable. Bob Curbeam was the capsule communicator, known as capcom, during John Glenn's second flight to space. As capcom, he communicated directly with the crew.

centerwide
No hyphen

center names
The centers are part of NASA and require the possessive case. On first reference, always use NASA's before the center name and include location after center name (comma always follows location when the state is included). The exception is NASA Headquarters, which is not possessive. Do not add the before a center name (e.g., the Langley Research Center). On second and subsequent references, NASA may be added before the center name for branding purposes, e.g., NASA Langley.

Separate the name of the center and its location with the word "in" and not a comma. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California is located near Los Angeles. On second reference, use Johnson, Kennedy, Marshall, etc., rather than the abbreviation. JPL is an exception. Never capitalize center when it stands alone. NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston will hold a news conference. Reporters at the center may ask questions.

Facilities such as Wallops, Plum Brook and White Sands, which are subsets of various centers, should be introduced as a possessive of NASA, not the center. NASA's White Sands Space Harbor in Las Cruces, New Mexico, was an optional landing site for the space shuttle.

Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales
The French space agency. Avoid abbreviation, but, if necessary, abbreviate to CNES.

China National Space Administration
Avoid abbreviation, but, if necessary, abbreviate to CNSA.

cislunar
Space between Earth and the Moon. One word, no hyphen. The term is an adjective, and should be followed by a noun, such as space or exploration. However, avoid use when possible. Instead, use explanatory verbiage such as deep space frontier around the Moon or thousands of miles beyond the Moon or proving ground of deep space near the Moon.

clean room

climate change
The variation in Earth's global climate over time, either cooling or warming. This term describes changes in the average state of the atmosphere over a long time scale, as opposed to brief changes in weather. It is not synonymous with global warming.

closeout
One word in nearly all cases: closeout crew, closeout photos, etc., except when used as a verb: When they close out the remaining tasks, we'll be ready to go.

cockpit
A compartment in the front of the airplane or space shuttle where the flight crew performs its job of flying the craft.

Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility
Dateline is Palestine, Texas. The facility is a division of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. On first reference, identify as NASA's Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility in Las Palestine, Texas.

comet
Capitalize only the proper noun element of the name – e.g., Halley's comet.

commas
In a break from AP style, NASA style is to use the Oxford comma – the comma placed immediately before the coordinating conjunction (usually and or or) in a series of three or more terms. e.g., NASA's Commercial Crew Program astronauts are Bob Behnken, Doug Hurley, Nicole Mann, Chris Ferguson, Eric Boe, Victor Glover, Mike Hopkins, Suni Williams, and Josh Cassada.

Commercial Crew and Cargo Program
Oversees NASA's Commercial Orbital Transportation Services Project. Do not refer to it by its abbreviation, C3PO.

Commercial Crew Program
NASA's Commercial Crew Program is an innovative partnership to help the aerospace industry in the United States develop space transportation systems that can safely launch astronauts to the International Space Station and other low-Earth orbit destinations. It can be abbreviated to CCP on second reference.

Commercial Lunar Payload Services
NASA's initiative to send science instruments and technology demonstrations to the Moon on commercial landers. Do not refer to it as CLPS on external products. Instead, use plain language such as commercial Moon deliveries or commercial landers, etc.

Commercial Orbital Transportation Services
A NASA project that was intended to foster a robust commercial space industry through government investment of seed money in demonstrations of transportation capabilities to and from the International Space Station and future purchase of services. Abbreviate to COTS on second reference.

Commercial Resupply Services
Commercial Resupply Services (CRS) are contracts NASA has signed with SpaceX and Orbital Sciences Corp. (Orbital ATK) for cargo flight for the International Space Station. For specific flights, NASA uses the designation SpaceX CRS-5, for the fifth mission by SpaceX flying under the contract, or Orbital ATK CRS-2, for the second mission by Orbital flying under the contract.

company names
For a company's formal name, consult the national stock exchanges New York Stock Exchange, www.nyse.com; Nasdaq, www.nasdaq.com; or the American Stock Exchange, www.amex.com. Do not use a comma before Inc. or Ltd., even if it is included in the formal name. The formal name need not be used on first reference, but it should be contained, with the location, in the body of the text.

Generally, follow the spelling and capitalization preferred by the company eBay. But capitalize the first letter if it begins a sentence. Do not use all capital letter names unless the letters are individually pronounced BMW. Others should be uppercase and lowercase. Ikea not IKEA; USA Today, not USA TODAY.

Do not use symbols such as exclamation points, plus signs or asterisks that form contrived spellings that might distract or confuse a reader. Use Yahoo, not Yahoo!; Toys R Us, not Toys "R" Us; E-Trade, not E*Trade. Use an ampersand only if it is part of the company's formal name, but not otherwise in place of and. Use the lowercase unless it is part of the company's formal name.

control center
Use the appropriate proper name, i.e. Kennedy's Launch Control Center and Johnson's Mission Control Center, on first reference. On second reference, launch control, mission control or control center are acceptable.

copyright ©, registered trademarks ® and trademarks TM
Do not use the words or symbols denoting copyrights, registered trademarks or trademarks in NASA products.

corrections
See the news release guidelines appendix.

cosmonaut
The Russian word meaning a person trained by a human spaceflight program to command, pilot or serve as a crew member of a spacecraft.

crawler-transporter

crew
Because crew is singular, the corresponding pronoun is it. Use crew members when appropriate.

crewmate

crew member
The International Space Station crew members are home.

crew titles
Lowercase the terms commander, pilot, mission specialist, capsule communicator, payload specialist and flight engineer except when directly preceding a name or names. Avoid lengthy title introductions. Expedition 15 Commander Fyodor Yurchikhin and Flight Engineers Oleg Kotov and Clay Anderson will move the Soyuz.

CubeSat
A CubeSat is a type of miniaturized satellite for space research. The accepted aerospace industry standard is to capitalize the C and S in CubeSat. The primary system of measurement for CubeSats is metric. See measurements.

D

dark side of the Moon
See far side.

dashes
In contrast to AP style, NASA style is to use the en dash (instead of the em dash) to signal abrupt change, as one option to set off a series within a phrase, and to start lists. There should be a space on each side of the dash. Do not confuse with a hyphen. Hyphens are used to join compound modifiers (e.g., long-range planning) and to signify numerical ranges (e.g., Jan. 1-4 or 300-350 people). There should be no spaces surrounding a hyphen.

data
AP's latest says "The word typically takes singular verbs and pronouns when writing for general audiences and in data journalism contexts: *The data is sound.* In scientific and

academic writing, plural verbs and pronouns are preferred. Use *databank* and *database*, but *data processing* (n. and adj.) and *data center*.

dateline
NASA releases and media advisories no longer require a dateline. For reference only, the following are the datelines for NASA's centers and facilities:

Ames	Silicon Valley, California	JSC	Houston
Armstrong	Edwards, California	KSC	Florida
CSBF	Palestine, Texas	LaRC	Hampton, Virginia
GISS	New York	MSFC	Huntsville, Alabama
Glenn	Cleveland	NSSC	Stennis Space Center, Miss.
Goddard	Greenbelt, Maryland	Plum Brook	Sandusky, Ohio
HQ	Washington	SSC	Bay St. Louis, Mississippi
IV&V	Fairmont, West Virginia	WFF	Wallops Island, Virginia
JPL	Pasadena, California	WSTF	Las Cruces, New Mexico

deep space
Even when used as a modifier, do not hyphenate.

Deep Space Network
A global system for communicating with interplanetary spacecraft. It consists of three clusters of antennas spaced approximately 120 degrees apart around the world at Goldstone, in California's Mojave Desert; near Madrid, Spain; and near Canberra, Australia.

delta-v
For clarity, refer to the definition, which is the change in velocity. It is a measure for the amount of effort needed to change from one orbit to another. The change in velocity typically is provided by the thrust of a rocket engine.

deorbit
The process of a spacecraft leaving low-Earth orbit as part of its return. The terms deorbit and deorbit burn are jargon; the preference is to refer to the spacecraft leaving low-Earth orbit.

descend
To come down under control from a higher to a lower altitude.

descent
The action carried out in flying an aircraft from a higher to lower altitude.

Destiny Laboratory
The Destiny Laboratory is the primary lab for U.S. research payloads aboard the International Space Station. Destiny is 28 feet long, 14 feet wide and weighs 16 tons. It launched in 2001 aboard space shuttle Atlantis on the STS-98 mission. Destiny, the laboratory and the lab are acceptable on second reference. See International Space Station.

downlink (n., adj.), down link (v.)
NASA provided a downlink. The space station crew down linked a holiday message. This is NASA jargon and should be used sparingly.

drone
Drone is the common name for an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). Drones are generally small, remotely piloted vehicles that are powered by electricity. Although the terms can be used interchangeably, generally Unmanned Aircraft Systems is used on first reference, followed by something like “popularly known as drones.”

dwarf planet
Defined by the International Astronomical Union as an object in orbit around the Sun that is large enough to have its own gravity pull itself into a round, or nearly round, shape. Generally, a dwarf planet is smaller than Mercury. A dwarf planet also may orbit in a zone that has many other objects in it, such as within the asteroid belt. Currently, five objects are accepted as dwarf planets: Ceres, Pluto, Eris, Makemake and Haumea. Also see the entry for plutoids, which currently are Pluto and Eris, and http://www.iau.org/public_press/themes/pluto/.

E

educator astronaut
A fully qualified astronaut who has expertise in kindergarten through 12th grade education.

Earth
For NASA, generally capitalize Earth to indicate the proper name of the planet. Do not use the before Earth.

Eastern Range
The Eastern Range (known as the Eastern Test Range from 1964-1990) describes restricted airspace, downrange tracking stations, security, and weather forecasting services that supports missile and launch vehicle activity from the U.S. East Coast, including launch sites in Florida and Virginia. The 45th Space Wing of the U.S. Space Force manages the Eastern Range. Avoid the abbreviation ER.

egress
NASA jargon for exiting the International Space Station. Avoid use.

electrification
An area of research within NASA Aeronautics to enable the increased use of electricity in powering the propulsion systems that provide thrust for airplanes. This can mean all-electric or hybrid-electric aircraft.

end of mission
The official end of a space mission measured in hours and minutes since time of launch.

equator

ESA (European Space Agency)
ESA followed by spelling out in parentheses, on first reference. Abbreviation only for following references. ESA's 22 member states are Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom Canada, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic also participate in some projects under cooperative agreements.

evolved expendable launch vehicle, expendable launch vehicle
The rocket used in expendable launch systems are designed to be used only once, and their components are not recovered after launch. The vehicle typically consists of several rocket stages, discarded one by one as the vehicle gains altitude and speed.

NASA's Launch Services Program, which is managed from Kennedy Space Center, oversees processing, integration and launches for NASA missions that launch on expendable launch vehicles, also known as ELVs, from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida and Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

The term Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle, or EELV, is the name of the U.S. Air Force program that led to the development of the family of Delta IV and Atlas V rockets. In 2019, the Air Force renamed the EELV program to the National Security Space Launch program and will procure future launch services from commercial providers whose rockets become certified for consideration, such as SpaceX’s Falcon 9. Rockets used in launch services procured by NASA should not be called EELVs.

exoplanet
A planet that orbits a star outside our solar system.

exosphere
The outermost region of a planet's atmosphere. See also atmosphere.

Exploration Mission-1/2/3 (EM-1/2/3)
Now known as Artemis I, Artemis II, and Artemis III. No hyphen.

extravehicular activity
The preferred term is spacewalk. Avoid use of the term and its abbreviation to EVA.

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F

far side of the Moon
Use instead of dark side when talking about the hemisphere of the Moon that always faces away from Earth because the far side gets as much sunlight as the near side.

Federal Aviation Administration
This government agency oversees all regulatory matters related to licensing and certifying aviation and commercial spaceflight activity within the United States. FAA is acceptable on second reference. The FAA also provides air traffic management for the National Airspace System.

female vs. woman
Although exceptions exist, for consistency, woman should always be used as a noun and female as an adjective. Eileen Collins was the first woman to command a space shuttle. Sally Ride was the first female American to fly in space. See male vs. man.

Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope
NASA's mission to explore the universe in high-energy gamma rays. Previously known as the Gamma-ray Large Area Space Telescope (GLAST), NASA renamed the telescope Fermi in honor of Professor Enrico Fermi (1901-1954), a pioneer in high-energy physics. On second reference, it is acceptable to refer to the telescope simply as Fermi.

flight day

flight deck
The place from which an aircraft is controlled.

flight suit

fly-around (n.)
The spacecraft undocked from the International Space Station and performed a fly-around before returning to Earth.

flyby (n.), fly by (v.)
The Messenger flyby of Earth took place on Aug. 2, 2005. Messenger is set to fly by Earth on Aug. 2, 2005.

foreign countries
If unsure of the correct spelling, consult the State Department's list at http://www.state.gov/misc/list/index.htm or the CIA's World Factbook at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/index.html.

foundation surface habitat
Part of the Artemis program – a pressurized permanent habitat that can house four astronauts on short surface stays on the lunar South Pole. Lowercase and no acceptable acronym.

free fall (n.)

G

g
gravity. The symbol g is properly written in lowercase and italics to distinguish it from the symbol G, the gravitational constant, which always is written in uppercase; and from g, the symbol for gram, which is not italicized. Written with an Arabic numeral, a space, then the symbol – e.g., 3 g NOT 3 gs or 3g.

g-force
The force of gravity or acceleration on a body, also acceleration.

galaxy
Capitalize only the proper noun element of the name – e.g., Milky Way galaxy.

gamma ray
A photon emitted spontaneously by a radioactive substance; also a photon of higher energy than that of an X-ray. The term usually is used in plural. Hyphenate when used as an adjective, as in Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope.

Gateway
Capitalized. Not “The” Gateway. For second and subsequent references, lunar Gateway, spaceship or lunar outpost are acceptable. No longer referred to as Lunar Orbital Platform-Gateway or LOP-G. Gateway will be built in two phases – the first will be the minimal capabilities required to support a human lunar landing by 2024. Phase 1 includes the power and propulsion element and a crew cabin. Phase 2 includes expanded modules, including many from international partners, to support sustainable lunar exploration by 2028.

General Dynamics
Dateline is Falls Church, Virginia, where it is headquartered.

German Aerospace Center
Avoid abbreviation, but, if necessary, abbreviate as DLR, for the Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt.

Gemini mission numbers
Use Roman numerals instead of Arabic numerals – e.g., Gemini XII. Note: While either pronunciation (jem-ih-knee vs. jem-ih-nye) is acceptable, the original intent by the NASA official who suggested the name was to pronounce it jem-ih-knee.

GLAST
See entry for Fermi.

Glenn, John H. Glenn Research Center in Cleveland
Standard use is NASA's Glenn Research Center. Dateline is Cleveland.

global warming
This term describes the observed and projected increase in Earth's globally averaged atmospheric and oceanic temperatures over time. It is not synonymous with climate change.

Go/No-Go
The launch director is about to do the Go/No-Go poll.

Goddard, Robert H. Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland
Standard use is NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Dateline is Greenbelt, Maryland.

Goddard Institute for Space Studies
The dateline is New York. NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, known as GISS and located at Columbia University in New York, is a laboratory of the Earth Science Division of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and a unit of the Columbia University Earth Institute. Research at GISS emphasizes a broad study of global climate change.

gravity
The force of attraction exerted by all objects with mass. Gravity is the force that gives objects weight, and keeps planets and satellites in orbit. Also see entries for microgravity and zero gravity.

Great Observatories
Capitalized. The Hubble, Compton, Chandra and Spitzer telescopes collectively are known as NASA's Great Observatories.

gyroscope
A device used to sense directional changes and develop signals for operating automatic pilots and inertial guidance systems.

gyro-compass
A compass consisting of a motor-operated gyroscope with a rotating axis that is kept in a horizontal plane. It takes a position parallel to Earth's rotation and points to the geographical North Pole instead of the magnetic pole.

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H

habitable mobility platform
Part of the Artemis program – a pressurized vehicle that will allow crew to take trips across the Moon lasting as long as 45 days. No acceptable acronym.

HALO
Part of the Artemis program - The habitation and logistics outpost will be a key module of the Gateway in lunar orbit. Lowercase when spelled out. HALO is acceptable on second and subsequent references.

Harmony module
Harmony, or Node 2, is the utility hub of the International Space Station. The hub contains four racks that provide electrical power and bus electronic data. It also acts as a central connecting point for several other components. Harmony launched into space on STS-120 in October 2007. See International Space Station.

headlines
NASA style for news releases is to use title case in a headline, which should typically fit on one line. Otherwise, only the first word and proper nouns are capitalized. Follow story style in spelling, but use Arabic numerals for most all numbers and single quotes for quotation marks. Exception: use US and UN (no periods) in all headlines. Do not use “and” in headlines. Instead, use a comma. NASA Awards Engineering, Research Support Contract

headquarters
Lowercase, unless referring to NASA Headquarters in Washington. The abbreviation HQ should be avoided.

heat shield
On a spacecraft, an addition that is designed to protect it from the high temperature of atmospheric entry on a body with an atmosphere, such as Earth or Mars.

heavy-lift (adj.)
NASA's planned heavy-lift rocket is the Space Launch System.

heliophysics
The study of the Sun and how it affects space – including changes that have the potential to impact satellites and astronauts. Heliophysics studies the dynamic, interconnected system from the Sun, to the space environment around Earth and other planets, out to the edges of the Sun’s radiative influence where the Voyager spacecraft now reside.

hot fire (adj.)
NASA completed the third hot fire test of an RS-25 engine of the Space Launch System (SLS) at its Stennis Space Center.

Hubble Space Telescope
NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope was carried into orbit by space shuttle Discovery on STS-31 in April 1990. Hubble is one of NASA's Great Observatories. Hubble was the only telescope ever designed to be serviced in space by astronauts. On second reference, it is acceptable to refer to the telescope simply as Hubble or the Hubble or the telescope. Avoid use of the abbreviation HST. The Space Telescope Science Institute, located on the Johns Hopkins University Homewood campus in Baltimore, Maryland, is the science operations center for the Hubble Space Telescope and the James Webb Space Telescope.

human landing system(s) (HLS)
Part of the Artemis program – The commercial transportation system(s) NASA will use to send astronauts to the surface of the Moon. Will dock either with Orion or the Gateway in lunar orbit. Lowercase when spelled out. HLS is acceptable on second and subsequent references.

hypersonic
Velocity greater than five times the speed of sound.

hyphens
See Punctuation

I

illustration
Use to identify an artist’s depiction of an object or concept. Not an actual image.
Independent Verification & Validation Facility
See entry for Katherine Johnson

Indian Space Research Organization
Avoid abbreviation, but, if necessary, abbreviate to ISRO.

in-flight (adj.)
The International Space Station crew conducted an in-flight interview.

ingress
NASA jargon for entering the International Space Station. Avoid use.

in-orbit (adj.), in orbit (n.)
NOT on-orbit. After eight years of in-orbit operations that gave astronomers a completely new perspective on the universe, NASA has concluded the Far Ultraviolet Spectroscopic Explorer mission. The Hubble Space Telescope is in its second decade in orbit.

InSight mission
See Mars InSight mission

in-situ resource utilization
Describes the proposed use of resources found or processed on other planetary bodies (the Moon, Mars, etc.) to further the goals of a space mission. As this is not a well-known term, either provide a description or use the expression living off the land.

interim cryogenic propulsion stage
Lowercase in all uses.

international names
Keep proper names in the spelling of the language of origin. For place names, translate as applicable. The University of Vienna contributed to the study. NOT The Universität Wien contributed to the study.

International Space Station
On second reference, space station, station, orbiting laboratory or orbital outpost. Avoid use of the abbreviation ISS in external products, unless it's part of a proper name – e.g., ISS Progress spacecraft. International Space Station crew missions are designated as Expeditions. On first reference, International Space Station or space station should precede the Expedition designation – e.g., International Space Station Expedition 35, space station Expedition 36/37.

See Destiny Laboratory, Harmony module, Kibo module, Tranquility node, Quest Joint Airlock, Unity connecting module, Zarya module and Zvezda service module.

internet addresses (URLs)
News releases should contain links for additional information. Use https://www.nasa.gov in contract releases and as a default in other products if no other links are applicable. Per AP, include https://. Work with the Digital Communications team at NASA Headquarters to determine the simplest URL that is applicable. Use URLs within the NASA domain, although additional or outside URLs are acceptable for joint releases. See Hyperlinks and URLs.

internet terms
Internet, web, webcast, website, webpage, webcam, webmaster, podcast, vodcast, email.

ionosphere
A complex atmospheric zone of ionized gases that extends between 50 and 400 miles (80 to 640 kilometers) above Earth's surface. It's located between the mesosphere and the exosphere and is included as part of the thermosphere. See also atmosphere.

Italian Space Agency
Avoid abbreviation, but, if necessary, abbreviate to ASI for Agenzia Spaziale Italiana.

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J

James E. Webb Memorial Auditorium
The public auditorium at NASA's Headquarters. Use the full title in news releases and media advisories.

James Webb Space Telescope
Avoid use of the abbreviation JWST. Webb or Webb telescope can be used on second reference. The Space Telescope Science Institute, located on Johns Hopkins University's Homewood campus in Baltimore is the science operations center for the James Webb Space Telescope.

Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency
Avoid abbreviation, but, if necessary, abbreviate to JAXA.

Jet Propulsion Laboratory
Standard use is NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Dateline is Southern California for most references, except for reasons that necessitate using a specific city, then use Pasadena, California. Acceptable to use JPL on second reference. The California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California, manages JPL for NASA.

Johnson, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Standard use is NASA's Johnson Space Center. Dateline is Houston.

K

Katherine Johnson Independent Verification & Validation Facility
Dateline is Fairmont, West Virginia. It’s a division of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Often referred to as IV&V, and renamed in 2019, the full name should be spelled out on first reference in products: NASA's Katherine Johnson Independent Verification & Validation Facility. Use IV&V on subsequent references. It was established in 1993.

Kazakhstan

Kennedy, John F. Kennedy Space Center
Standard use is NASA's Kennedy Space Center. Dateline is Cape Canaveral, Fla. However, within the body of a news release, the locator is Kennedy Space Center, Florida. The Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge is located in Kennedy Space Center and shares the same boundaries.

Kibo module
Kibo is the largest International Space Station module, consisting of three parts. The pieces were launched on space shuttle missions STS-123, STS-124 and STS-127. Kibo

also is called the Japanese Experiment Module. Kibo is not an acronym but the Japanese word meaning "hope." See International Space Station.

Kourou, French Guiana
This is the closest city to the Guiana Space Centre, the South American launch site just north of the equator where the European commercial launch services firm Arianespace launches its Ariane 5, Soyuz ST, and Vega rockets.

Kuiper Belt
A disk-shaped region of icy debris about 2.8 billion to 4.6 billion miles (4.5 to 7.5 billion km) from our Sun.

Kwajalein Atoll
The Kwajalein Atoll is part of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific Ocean. The southernmost and largest island in the atoll is named Kwajalein Island. Eleven of the 97 islands are leased by the United States and are part of the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site, the only U.S. government equatorial launch facility. SpaceX established Omelek Island in the atoll as its primary launch location.

L

laboratory
Lowercase. For laboratory modules of the International Space Station, uppercase the formal name. Columbus laboratory, Destiny laboratory, Kibo laboratory.

Lagrange, Lagrangian
The preferred term is Lagrange. There are five Lagrange points; each is one point in the plane of orbit of one body around another (e.g., the Moon around Earth) at which a small third body can remain stationary with respect to both.

Langley, Samuel P. Langley Research Center
Standard use is NASA's Langley Research Center. Dateline is Hampton, Virginia.

lateral axis
The axis extending through the center of gravity of an aircraft, and parallel to a line connecting the tips of the wings. The lateral axis is sometimes called the "y" axis. Pitch is a motion around the lateral axis.

latitude
Linear or angular distance that is measured north or south of the equator in degrees, minutes and seconds.

launch abort system
Lowercase in all uses.

launch complex
The launch complex at NASA's Kennedy Space Center includes both launch pads 39A and 39B. It should be lowercase except when used as a proper noun: Launch Complex 39.

Launch Control Center, launch control
The location from which NASA controls the launch of the space shuttle or other launch vehicles. On second reference, launch control or control center is acceptable.

launch pad
Lowercase except when used to name a specific launch pad – e.g., Launch Pad 39B.

Launch Complex 39A
NASA signed a 20-year lease in April 2014 with SpaceX to operate and maintain the historic launch pad at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center.

launch time
For launches in the United States, launch time always should be given in the time zone in which the launch takes place. For launches outside the United States, give the launch time in Eastern when it will be covered live on NASA Television, per AP television coverage guidance. If it will not be carried on NASA TV, give the time in the U.S. based on which NASA center is most responsible, followed by the local time. An International Space Station release from Houston should list a launch from Baikonur, Kazakhstan, in Eastern time first, followed by Kazakhstan time: The launch is scheduled for 2:13 p.m. EST on Jan. 24 (1:13 a.m. on Jan. 25 Kazakhstan time).

launch vehicle
It is acceptable in most cases to simplify to the term rocket.

leading edge
The front edge of an airfoil or wing. The leading edge normally is rounded and thicker than the trailing edge.

lift off (v.), liftoff (n., adj.)
NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander is scheduled to lift off Saturday, Aug. 4, at 5:26 a.m. EDT. Liftoff of the Dawn mission to study a pair of asteroids was Thursday, Sept. 27, 2007, from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida at 7:34 a.m. EDT.

light-year
Hyphenated. The distance light travels in one year at the rate of 186,282 miles per second. It equals approximately 5.88 trillion miles (5,878,612,800,000 miles).

liquid oxygen
A supercold, or cryogenic, liquid used as rocket propellant. Rocket propellant requires both fuel and oxidizer, of which liquid oxygen is the oxidizer. Common fuel it is combined with includes RP-1 (rocket propellant-1, which is refined kerosene), liquid hydrogen, or liquid methane. Avoid use of the acronym LOX.

Lockheed Martin Corporation
Headquarters is in Bethesda, Maryland. Lockheed Martin Space is located in Littleton, Colorado. Denver is usually used for the locator.

longitude
Linear or angular distance that is measured west or east of the Prime Meridian in degrees, minutes and seconds.

longitudinal axis
The axis extending through the center of the fuselage from the nose to the tail. The longitudinal axis is sometimes called the "x" axis. Roll is a motion around the longitudinal axis.

Low-Boom Flight Demonstration
Low-Boom Flight Demonstration, or LBFD, is the name of the NASA Aeronautics mission to collect data that could make commercial supersonic flight over land possible, dramatically reducing travel time in the United States or anywhere in the world. The mission will use the X-59 Quiet SuperSonic Technology airplane to generate quiet sonic “thumps” over select communities and measure residents’ response to the sound – if they hear anything at all. The data will be delivered to U.S. and international regulators with the intent they will change current rules that prohibit faster-than-sound flight over land.

Low Boom Flight Demonstrator
The name of the NASA project responsible for managing the design and construction of the X-59 Quiet SuperSonic Technology airplane. Before it received its official X-plane number designation from the U.S. Air Force, the X-59 was called the Low Boom Flight Demonstrator. Do not use Low Boom Flight Demonstrator to describe the aircraft.

low-Earth orbit
Although Webster's does not capitalize earth when used in this context, NASA does so because it refers specifically to a low orbit around planet Earth. Also, low-Earth is hyphenated like near-Earth object. Avoid using the acronym LEO.

lunar terrain vehicle (LTV)
Part of the Artemis program – an unpressurized (unenclosed) vehicle astronauts will use to travel short distances around a landing site on the Moon. LTV is acceptable on second and subsequent references.

M

magnetic variation
The difference between true north and magnetic north, varying with position; magnetic variation drifts with time.

main gear
The largest landing gear under the fuselage of an aircraft or for the space shuttle. Main gear are usually augmented by other landing gear located under the nose, tail or wingtips and can take the form of wheels or skids.

male vs. man
Although exceptions exist, for consistency, male should always be used as an adjective and man as a noun. John Glenn was the first American male astronaut to orbit Earth. Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the Moon. See female vs. woman.

man-made
Avoid use. Use human-made.

mankind
Avoid use. Per AP, frequently the best choice is a substitute such as humanity.

manned, unmanned
Avoid use. In many cases, the distinction is unnecessary or implied. Substitute terms such as autonomous, crewed, human, piloted, unpiloted, robotic, remotely piloted.

Marshall, George C. Marshall Space Flight Center
Standard use is NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center. Dateline is Huntsville, Alabama.

Mars InSight mission
The official name of the mission is Mars InSight, not InSight Mars.

Martian
Capitalize nouns and adjectives derived from the proper names of planets.

Maxar Technologies
The commercial partner developing and demonstrating the power, propulsion and communication capabilities for the Gateway. The company name was formerly SSL. Dateline is Westminster, Colorado. Maxar acceptable on second and subsequent references.

measurements
Do not use metric measurements unless they are the universally accepted form of measurement (e.g., 35 mm film, CubeSat measurements) or where the metric distance is an important number in itself. It’s acceptable to use metric in a joint news release with an international partner. When using metric, include the Imperial conversion in parentheses or provide an equivalent – e.g., approximately the size of a football field. If needed, the Imperial number can be followed by the metric in parentheses.

memorandum of understanding
A legal document describing a bilateral or multilateral agreement between parties, indicating an intended common line of action. It may not imply a legal commitment and, in some cases, lacks the binding power of a contract. The abbreviation, when used, is MOU.

mesosphere
The region of Earth's atmosphere above the stratosphere and below the thermosphere, between about 30 and 50 miles (50 and 80 kilometers) in altitude. See also atmosphere.

Michoud Assembly Facility
Standard use is NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility. Dateline is New Orleans. It should be referred to as Michoud on second reference, not MAF.

microgravity
A term commonly applied to a condition of free fall within a gravitational field in which the weight of an object is reduced compared to its weight at rest on Earth. A term used synonymously with weightlessness.

middeck

midbody

Mission Control Center, mission control
The location from which NASA controls the International Space Station at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston. On second reference, mission control or control center is acceptable.

mission directorate
Capitalized only as part of a formal name, such as Science Mission Directorate.

mission milestones
Critical design review, preliminary design review, mission concept review, and other mission milestones, should not be capitalized. Abbreviate after the first mention.

mission specialist
Lowercase except when directly preceding a name or names. Mission Specialist Andrew Thomas performed the spacewalk. Mission Specialists Tracy Caldwell and Rick Mastracchio participated in the media opportunity. Also see the entry for crew titles.

mobile launcher
A 355-foot-tall structure with a two-story base and a tower that will be used to assemble and process the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and Orion spacecraft in the Vehicle Assembly Building and then transport SLS and Orion to launch pad 39B at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. It will roll out to the pad on top of the crawler-transporter and will also serve as the rocket’s launch platform. Do not use mobile launch platform or mobile launcher platform, which was used for the space shuttle. The mobile launcher will be used along with the crawler-transporter to move the SLS with Orion on top from Kennedy's Vehicle Assembly Building to Launch Pad 39B.

mobile launcher platform
A two-story structure, used along with the crawler-transporter, that was used to transport the space shuttle from the Vehicle Assembly Building to either Launch Pad 39A or 39B at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. It also served as the vehicle's launch

platform. Do not use mobile launch platform. The structures may be used with commercial company spaceflight operations based out of Kennedy.

Moon and moon
Lowercase unless referring to Earth's Moon. When talking about the hemisphere of the Moon that always faces away from Earth, use the term far side, not dark side. When referring to a phase of a moon, you are discussing an astronomical phenomena rather than a named astronomical body and should, therefore, use lower case.

moonwalk, moonwalker

Moon to Mars
America's Moon to Mars exploration approach is a more public-friendly way of saying Space Policy Directive-1, which is national space policy established in December 2017 that provides for a U.S.-led, integrated program with private sector partners for a human return to the Moon, followed by missions to Mars and beyond.

multi-user
Per AP style for prefixes, this should be hyphenated. Kennedy Space Center is America's multi-user spaceport.

N

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NASA is acceptable on all references.

NASA Headquarters
Capitalize headquarters only in this context. This use differs from that of the other NASA centers, which use the possessive form NASA's. The abbreviation HQ should be avoided. The building in Washington, D.C., where the NASA administrator and other agency senior leadership work from was named the Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters building in June 2020. Examples of use:

> *NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine will host a news conference about the agency's Moon to Mars exploration plans at 1 p.m. EDT Wednesday, June 24 from NASA Headquarters.*
>
> *The briefing will take place from the Webb Auditorium in the Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters building, 300 E. Street SW in Washington, D.C.*

NASA Television
No hyphen. NASA TV on second reference. The tagline for news releases is
For NASA TV streaming video, downlink and schedule information, visit https://www.nasa.gov/nasatv. Use https://www.nasa.gov/live to direct readers to NASA TV coverage.

nation

National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics
NASA's predecessor organization established in 1915 to "supervise and direct the scientific study of the problems of flight, with a view to their practical solution." Use the NACA on second reference. Note the correct pronunciation of the NACA is to say each letter individually. References to the NACA in writing should keep this in mind.

National Space Agency of Ukraine

nautical terms
Avoid the use of nautical terms such as aft, port and starboard, when possible. Substitute directional terms.

near-Earth object
Comets and asteroids that have been nudged by the gravitational attraction of nearby planets into orbits that allow them to enter Earth's neighborhood. (Because near-Earth is a compound modifier of object, it is hyphenated.)

nebula (singular), nebulae (plural)
Capitalize when used with name of specific nebula – e.g., Horsehead Nebula.

news conference
Per AP style, news conference is the preferred term. Also, use news release instead of press release.

news release
The preferred term. Avoid the use of press release.

newsroom, news center

news release format
See appendix Guidelines for NASA News Releases.

Node 1
See Unity connecting module.

Node 2
See Harmony module.

Node 3
See Tranquility node.

nominal
Avoid. Instead, use normal or normally.

North Pole
Capitalize for the geographic region on Earth, one of the two points where Earth's axis of rotation meets Earth's surface. Also known as the Arctic. If referring to the magnetic pole, say so. Lowercase north pole on other celestial bodies.

Northrop Grumman Corporation
Dateline is Los Angeles. Northrop Grumman Space Technology is the aerospace sector's headquarters and is located in Redondo Beach, California. The company's aeronautics sector, called Integrated Systems, is located in El Segundo, California.

Northrop Grumman Innovation Systems
Formerly known as Orbital ATK. Its dateline is Dulles, Virginia, the location of its headquarters.

nose gear
The landing gear nearest the nose of the aircraft; usually under the cockpit.

nova (singular), novae (plural)

Numbers
NASA uses the imperial system of measurement. However, if a metric measurement must be included, first use the imperial measurement and put the metric in parentheses after. Also, see Arabic numerals and Roman numerals.

O

onboard vs. aboard
Aboard and onboard mean almost the same thing, but the preferred term is aboard. The term onboard may be used as an adjective to refer to something carried within or occurring aboard a vehicle – e.g., an onboard guidance system. Avoid use of on board as a noun.

one-year mission or yearlong mission

on-orbit
Avoid use of this term, which is jargon. Use in-orbit (adj.) or in orbit (n.).

on-site

Oort Cloud
The Oort Cloud is a spherical region of space that surrounds our Sun and occupies space at a distance between 5,000 and 100,000 astronomical units (AU).

o-ring

Orbital ATK
Northrop Grumman Corporation of Falls Church, Virginia, acquired Orbital ATK on June 6, 2018. Orbital ATK now is Northrop Grumman Innovation Systems. Its dateline is Dulles, Virginia, the location of its headquarters.

Orion (multi-purpose crew vehicle)
The name for NASA's deep space spacecraft. Orion is designed to take astronauts farther into space than ever before, including an asteroid and Mars. Orion is capitalized as the proper noun, while multi-purpose crew vehicle is lower cased and not typically used to identify this crew capsule. Module names should be in lowercase – e.g., Orion service module.

ozone
O3, a triatomic form of oxygen. In the upper atmosphere, it forms a protective layer against excess ultraviolet radiation. In the lower atmosphere, it is an ingredient of photochemical smog. The upper atmosphere, from about 8 to 30 miles above Earth, is where most atmospheric ozone is concentrated; it is depleted by industrial pollutants, such as chlorofluorocarbons.

P

payload
Anything that a flight vehicle carries beyond what is required for its operation during flight.

percent, percentage, percentage points
Per a 2019 AP change, use the % sign when paired with a numeral, with no space: Average hourly pay rose 3.1% from a year ago; her mortgage rate is 4.75%; about 60% of Americans agreed; he won 56.2% of the vote. Use figures: 1%, 4 percentage points. For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero: The cost of living rose 0.6%.

pilot
Lowercase except when directly preceding a name. See also the entry for crew titles.

pitch
A rotational motion in which a spacecraft or aircraft turns about its lateral axis. Pushing forward on the control stick will lower the elevators, which forces the tail upward. The pilot will then see the nose of the aircraft fall, or pitch.

Plum Brook Station
A satellite facility of NASA's Glenn Research Center. The dateline is Sandusky, Ohio. It is located on 6,400 acres of land near Sandusky, 56 miles west of Cleveland. It’s an

active testing and research installation housing some of the world's most advanced space environment simulation facilities. On first reference, NASA’s Plum Brook Station.

photo captions
Each photo caption is treated as a unique document. Therefore, use the standard format for first reference for astronaut names, company names, etc.

plutoid
Plutoids are celestial bodies in orbit around the Sun at a semimajor axis greater than that of Neptune, have sufficient mass for their self-gravity to overcome rigid body forces so that they assume a near-spherical shape, and have not cleared the neighborhood around their orbit. Satellites of plutoids are not plutoids themselves, even if they are massive enough that their shape is dictated by self-gravity. The two known and named plutoids are Pluto and Eris. See dwarf planet.

port
The side of a ship or aircraft that is on the left when one is facing forward.

postflight

postlaunch

Power and Propulsion Element for Gateway
The first element of the Gateway that will launch to space, providing power, propulsion, and communications to the spaceship in lunar orbit. Do use the abbreviation PPE on external products.

Pratt & Whitney
The company is headquartered in East Hartford, Connecticut. It is a United Technologies Company.

preflight

prelaunch

press release
Don't use. The preferred term is news release.

principal investigator
Capitalize when using as a title preceding a name.

probe
A device used to penetrate or send back information from outer space or a celestial body. Space probes destined for a planet or other astronomical body may be on a mission to fly by, impact, orbit or land. See spacecraft and satellite.

program, project
The word program within NASA refers to top-level initiatives under the mission directorates. A project is an individual venture under those programs. The Graduate Student Research Project is an opportunity offered by NASA's Higher Education Program. On second reference, the program or the project is preferred.

Progress spacecraft
Progress is a Russian expendable cargo spacecraft that resupplies the International Space Station about three or four times a year. When referring to a particular Progress spacecraft, indicate its International Space Station designation ISS Progress 40 or ISS Progress 41.

pronunciation guides
In press kits and fact sheets, include a pronunciation for any name with a pronunciation that could be in doubt for people and things. ESA (European Space Agency) astronauts Hans Schlegel (SHLAY-guhl) and Leopold Eyharts (a-arts) visited the International Space Station in 2008.

public
Never general public

Q

question-and-answer session

Quest Joint Airlock
Quest is the primary airlock for the International Space Station. Quest consists of two segments: the equipment lock and the crew lock.

QuikScat
Use NASA's Quick Scatterometer satellite on first reference. Abbreviate as QuikScat on second reference.

R

Raytheon Company
Headquarters is in Waltham, Massachusetts. Raytheon Space and Airborne Systems (SAS) is located in El Segundo, California.

Red Planet
An acceptable synonym for Mars on second reference.

re-entry

remotely piloted aircraft
Any aircraft that is flown by a human pilot that is not on board the aircraft. This can be a small drone flown by a person in direct line of sight or a large Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, such as NASA's Ikhana, that is flown via satellite by a pilot hundreds of miles away. Do not use RPA on second reference.

Return to Flight
Capitalized. It refers to a period of time preparing to resume space shuttle missions and the flights themselves following the Challenger and Columbia accidents – e.g., Return to Flight modifications and NASA's Return to Flight mission STS-114.

reusable solid rocket motor
The propellant segments of the solid rocket boosters. Use solid rocket boosters to describe the entire system, which includes the reusable solid rocket motors.

rocket
Lowercase in all instances.

Rocketplane Kistler
Dateline is Oklahoma City, where it is headquartered.

roll
Rock or oscillate around an axis parallel to the direction of motion.

roll around (v.), rollaround (n.)
The action or procedure of a spacecraft moving from one launch pad to another.

roll out (v.), rollout (n.)
The action or procedure of a spacecraft moving from a processing facility to the launch pad. Also describes the unveiling or debut of a new or significantly changed aircraft.

Roman numerals
The use of Roman numerals should be avoided, particularly in reference to mission numbers. Arabic numerals should be used for clarity. Roman numerals are acceptable for formal names, particularly in reference to specific rockets such as the Saturn V, Delta IV and Atlas V rockets.

Roscosmos
As of Jan. 1, 2016, the new name of Russia's space agency is Russian Roscosmos State Corporation. Use Russian space agency Roscosmos on first reference and Roscosmos on following references.

rover
Lowercase.

Russian Roscosmos State Corporation
See Roscosmos.

S

satellite
Term used to refer either to a celestial body orbiting another of larger size or to a manufactured object or vehicle intended to orbit Earth, the Moon or another celestial body. Spacecraft that do not enter into an orbit should not be referred to as satellites. See probe and spacecraft.

second person point of view
Use sparingly.

Satish Dhawan Space Centre, India

serial commas
In a break from AP style, NASA style is to use the serial comma, also known as the Oxford comma – the comma placed immediately before the coordinating conjunction (usually and or or) in a series of three or more terms. See commas.

service module
Do not capitalize.

Shuttle Landing Facility
The Shuttle Landing Facility at NASA's Kennedy Space Center – now known as the Launch and Landing Facility – covers 500 acres, has one of the longest runways in the world and consists of an extremely high-friction concrete strip designed to maximize the braking ability of the space shuttle at its high landing speed. The runway is designated runway 15 or runway 33, depending on the direction of use. In June 2015, NASA signed a 30-year property agreement with Space Florida to operate and manage the former Shuttle Landing Facility, which the organization renamed. Avoid use of the abbreviation SLF.

SLS
See Space Launch System.

solid rocket booster
One of the pencil-shaped first stage boosters that will be used to launch NASA's Space Launch System during its 2018 flight test and used to help launch the space shuttle. Avoid use of the abbreviation, SRB.

solar radiation
The electromagnetic radiation (energy) emitted by the Sun.

solar system
A grouping of a sun and other celestial objects gravitationally bound to it. In our system this includes: the eight planets, their 165 known moons, three dwarf planets (Ceres, Pluto, and Eris and their four known moons), the Oort Cloud and billions of small bodies, including asteroids, Kuiper Belt objects, comets, meteoroids, and interplanetary dust.

South Pole
Capitalize for the geographic region on Earth, one of the two points where Earth's axis of rotation meets Earth's surface. It is located on the continent of Antarctica. If referring to the magnetic pole, say so. Also capitalize when referencing our Moon's South Pole. Lowercase south pole on other celestial bodies.

Southwest Research Institute (SwRI)
Do not precede name with the. Spell out on first reference and abbreviate SwRI thereafter. Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) is an independent, nonprofit applied research and development organization. Headquarters dateline is San Antonio. Dateline for the Planetary Science Directorate is Boulder, Colorado.

space
Avoid use of the term outer space.

SpaceX (Space Exploration Technologies Corp.)
Located in Hawthorne, California. SpaceX is acceptable on first reference, in most cases. Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) should be used in more formal situations, such as in a contract release.

Space Act Agreement
Arrangements concluded under the "other transactions" authority of the Space Act are commonly referred to as Space Act Agreements. NASA uses this authority to enter into a wide range of agreements with numerous entities to advance NASA mission and program objectives. Avoid use of the abbreviation, SAA.

Space Age (n.), space-age (adj.)
Per AP, the Space Age began with the launching of Sputnik 1 on Oct. 4, 1957.

spacecraft
Term used to refer to a vehicle or device, with or without a human crew, that is designed for travel or operation outside Earth's atmosphere. A spacecraft that enters into an orbit around Earth, the Moon or another celestial body also is called a satellite. See also probe and satellite.

Spacehab
This company's name often is inconsistently used in all caps. It is not an acronym. The name should not be all in uppercase.

Space Launch System (SLS)
NASA's heavy-lift rocket under development that will launch NASA's Orion spacecraft from the agency's Kennedy Space Center Launch Pad 39B on deep space missions. SLS is acceptable on second reference.

Space Launch System (SLS) metric ton guidance
To be consistent with the aerospace industry and for "branding" identification purposes, NASA will break from AP style by listing the two types of SLS rockets on first reference with the metric-ton first and the tons (short tons) after, in parentheses, and then continue to use the metric-ton designation on the following references: 70-metric-ton (77-ton) and 130-metric-ton (143-ton) .

spacefaring

spaceflight
One word except when part of a NASA center name or similar title, such as NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

spaceflight participant
Lowercase. See crew titles for more information.

Space Mirror Memorial
This is the correct name of the fallen astronaut memorial at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex in Florida.

spaceplane

spaceport

Space Policy Directive-1 and Space Policy Directive-2
SPD-1 or SPD-2 on subsequent references.

space race

spaceship

space shuttle
Per AP style, lowercase. The exception is Space Shuttle Program.

Space Shuttle Program, shuttle program
Capitalize only when referring to the complete name of the program.

space station
See International Space Station.

space station components
Proper names of components should be capitalized – e.g., Destiny, Harmony, Zvezda. Lowercase the description – e.g., the U.S. Destiny laboratory module.

spacesuit
NASA prefers the compound word, deviating from Webster's, which lists it as two words.

space-time

spacewalk

starboard
The side of a ship or aircraft that is on the right when facing forward.

Stardust
The mission title is not an acronym.

Stennis, John C. Stennis Space Center
Standard use is NASA's Stennis Space Center. Dateline is Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. However, within the body of a news release, the locator is Stennis, Mississippi. The possessive form is Stennis'.

stratosphere
The layer of Earth's atmosphere above the troposphere, extending to about 31 miles (50 kilometers) above Earth's surface (the lower boundary of the mesosphere). It is stable and characterized by low moisture content and absence of traditional water clouds, though polar stratospheric clouds may form quite typically, especially at high latitudes during winter. This is also the layer of the atmosphere where there ozone layer exists. See also atmosphere.

subheads
Subheads should be avoided. If it is necessary to use a subhead, it should be in sentence case.

suborbital

subsonic
Velocity less than the speed of sound. The MD-11 is a subsonic aircraft because it never flies faster than the speed of sound.

Sun
Capitalize when referring to Earth’s star, lowercase when referring to another solar system’s star.

supermassive

supernova (singular), supernovae (plural)

supersonic
Velocity greater than the speed of sound. The SR-71 is characterized as a supersonic aircraft because it travels from three to four times faster than the speed of sound. A supersonic aircraft can fly from New York to London in less than two hours.

T

take off (v.), takeoff (n.)
The airplane is preparing to take off. The airplane's takeoff was an exciting moment.

Tanegashima, Japan
The headquarters of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, the Tanegashima Space Center spaceport, is located at the southeastern end of this island.

teleconference
Avoid use of the shortened telecon.

telephone numbers
AP style is to use hyphens. For more information, call the newsroom at 202-358-1600.

thermal protection system
Should be clarified as the spacecraft's heat shield on first reference.

thermosphere
The region of the atmosphere above the mesosphere and below the exosphere or height at which the atmosphere ceases to have the properties of a continuous medium. It includes the ionosphere. See also atmosphere.

thrust
The forward force generated when a propeller, jet engine or rocket engine sends a jet of fluid (such as air or burning fuel) rearward. The forward thrust is described by Newton's third law: for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

time
Times for events in the United States should be listed based on where the activities take place, such as where a launch occurs or where a news conference is held. For launches or activities outside the United States, give the time in Eastern when it will be covered live on NASA Television, per AP television coverage guidance. If it will not be carried on NASA TV, give the time in the United States based on which NASA center is most responsible, followed by the local time.

To be consistent with AP style and the major television networks, Eastern time should be considered the default for all events broadcast on NASA Television. The local time can be indicated as such in a parentheses. This is to benefit a nationwide audience and

be closer in sync with AP Style. NASA's Ames Research Center, Silicon Valley, California, will hold a news conference at 4 p.m. EST (1 p.m. PST), which will be carried live on NASA Television.

For events "off-planet," such as activities on the International Space Station, Moon and planetary events that will be carried live on NASA TV, use Eastern time. If it will not be carried live on NASA TV, use the time where the mission control center in charge of the event is located.

timeframe
Avoid using after a time or date range – e.g., use late November rather than late November timeframe.

time element
Per AP style, use days of the week, not today, tomorrow or tonight. The only exception is the use of today when issuing a media advisory for an event taking place the same day.

In a break with AP style for greater clarity, use the day of the week in addition to the date for upcoming events within a month of the day the release is issued. Otherwise, use of the date alone for an event longer than a month away is acceptable. For example, a news product issued Aug. 3 would state: *The launch is scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 8* or *The launch is scheduled for Sept. 20*.

For series of time or dates, consider the context when deciding whether to use a hyphen. If the time is introduced with "from," the words "to" or "through" should be used between the time elements. The crew interviews will take place from 2 to 4 p.m. When used as a parenthetical, hyphens are sufficient: During the mission, scheduled April 10-21, the crew will complete three spacewalks.

touch down (v.), touchdown (n.)
To reach the ground or land; the act or moment an aircraft or spacecraft lands.

Tranquility node
Tranquility, or Node 3, contains the most advanced life support systems ever flown in space and arrived to the International Space Station in 2009. See International Space Station.

transonic
Velocity between eight tenths (0.8) and one and two tenths (1.2) times the speed of sound – or Mach 0.8 to 1.2. Note the speed of sound varies based on atmospheric conditions.

tropopause
The boundary between the troposphere and the stratosphere, about 5 miles (8 km) in polar regions and about 9 miles (15 km) in tropical regions, usually characterized by an abrupt change of temperature in relation to height. The regions above the troposphere

have increased atmospheric stability compared to those below. The tropopause marks the vertical limit of most clouds and storms. See also atmosphere.

troposphere
The lowest region of the atmosphere, extending from Earth's surface to a height of about 6 to 9 miles (10-15 km), the lower boundary of the stratosphere. The area where temperature generally decreases with altitude, clouds form, precipitation occurs and convection currents are active. See also atmosphere.

truss segments
Spell out the truss' name, then use the letter and number designation with reference to its location on the International Space Station – e.g., The starboard 3, or S3, truss segment on the right side of the station; or, P6 on the left side of the station.

U

United Launch Alliance
Its dateline is Denver, where it is headquartered. Abbreviated to ULA on second reference.

United Space Alliance
Its dateline is Houston, where it is headquartered. Abbreviated to USA on second reference.

universe

unmanned, manned
Avoid use. In many cases, the distinction is unnecessary or implied. Substitute terms such as autonomous, crewed, human, piloted, unpiloted, robotic, remotely piloted.

unmanned aerial systems (UAS)
Use unmanned aerial system on first reference and UAS on the following references. Refers to the unmanned aircraft AND associated systems.

Unmanned Aircraft System
Generally describes a small, electrically powered aircraft that can fly short distances and is piloted by someone on the ground, usually within direct line of sight. Drones is a popular name for UAS and can be used interchangeably.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
Generally describes larger, remotely piloted vehicles that fly within the National Airspace System. NASA’s Ikhana Predator B aircraft is an example.

NOTE: NASA uses the word, “unmanned” since it’s aligned with the text in the Code of Federal Regulations. We will change this when the CFR is updated.

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Unity connecting module
The Unity connecting module, also known as Node 1, was the first U.S.-built component of the International Space Station. Essential space station resources such as fluids, environmental control and life support systems, electrical and data systems are routed through Unity. Unity was carried into orbit in December 1998 aboard space shuttle Endeavour's STS-88 mission. See International Space Station.

Urban Air Mobility
A concept for the use of small unmanned and piloted aircraft flying packages and people between points within a dense, urban environment such as Manhattan. UAM is acceptable on second reference. See Advanced Air Mobility for additional guidance.

U.S. Army's Yuma Proving Ground
Located in Arizona, the Yuma Proving Ground is one of the largest military installations in the world. NASA tests Orion spacecraft parachute systems at the military installation.

V

Van Allen Belts
Radiation belts that encircle Earth and are held in place by the planet's magnetic field.

Vehicle Assembly Building
A facility at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Florida, where space shuttles and the Saturn V rocket for the Apollo program were prepared for missions before being moved to Kennedy's launch pads. Also where NASA's Orion spacecraft and Space Launch System rocket, as well as potentially commercial companies' launch vehicles, will be prepared for flight before being moved to the launch pad. The facility's 129,428,000 cubic feet of work space make it one of the world's largest buildings in terms of usable volume. The building measures 525 feet tall. Avoid use of the abbreviation VAB, when possible.

VIPER
Part of the Artemis program – NASA's Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover is a small robot that will explore and map water on the lunar South Pole. VIPER is acceptable on second and subsequent references.

W

Wallops Flight Facility
Dateline is Wallops Island, Virginia. Wallops is a part of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. On first reference, identify as NASA's Wallops Flight Facility on Wallops Island, Virginia.

water ice
Preferred use is simply “ice” unless it is required to differentiate from other volatiles, such as methane ice. Lowercase.

Western Launch and Test Range
Also called the Western Range, it is a space launch range located at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Operated by the 30th Space Wing, the range begins at the coastal boundaries of Vandenberg and extends westward to the Marshall Islands, including sites in Hawaii on Oahu and Molokai. Avoid use of the abbreviation WLTR.

White Room
An environmentally controlled chamber at the outer end of the access arm platform on a launch pad that astronauts use to prepare to enter a spacecraft. The White Room was used during the space shuttle era at Kennedy Space Center and will be used with NASA's Orion and Space Launch System.

White Sands Test Facility
Dateline is Las Cruces, New Mexico. White Sands is a division of NASA's Johnson Space Center. On first reference, identify as NASA’s White Sands Test Facility in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

wave off
The preferred term used when NASA chooses to forgo a landing opportunity. NASA decided to wave off the first landing opportunity today.

weightlessness
A term commonly applied to a condition of free fall within a gravitational field in which the weight of an object is reduced compared to its weight at rest on Earth. A term used synonymously with microgravity and zero gravity.

wind tunnel
Tubular structure or passages in which high-speed movements of air or other gases are produced. Objects such as engines, aircraft, airfoils and rockets are placed inside the wind tunnel so researchers can investigate the airflow around them and the aerodynamic forces acting upon them.

wind tunnel (n.), wind-tunnel (adv.)
A model of the X-59 is in a wind tunnel ready for testing. A model of the X-59 recently completed a round of wind-tunnel testing.

winter storms
Do not identify winter snowstorms by the proper names bestowed by The Weather Channel.

World Wide Web
Additionally, web, webcast, website, webpage, webcam, webmaster, unless it's a formal title then it would be Webmaster.

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XYZ

X-59 QueSST
The X-59 Quiet SuperSonic Technology aircraft is NASA's first piloted X-plane in a generation. It is designed to fly faster than sound yet generate a sonic boom that is so quiet it can barely be heard on the ground, if at all. Spell out the full name of the airplane on first reference. X-59 is acceptable on second reference. See Low Boom Flight Demonstration for more information about how the X-59 will be used.

X-57 Maxwell
The X-57 Maxwell is a small General Aviation-sized aircraft that is exploring how to design and operate an airplane powered entirely by electricity. It is named for James Clerk Maxwell, a 19th century Scottish physicist who pioneered the theory of electromagnetism. X-57 is acceptable on second reference.

X-plane
Short for experimental airplane and usually refers to a major research program in which the airplane is given a unique X-plane number and nickname by the U.S. Air Force. NASA's most historic X-planes include the X-1 (first plane to break the sound barrier) and the X-15 rocket plane (helped pave the way for the space shuttle).

X-ray

yaw
A rotational motion in which the aircraft turns around its vertical axis. This causes the aircraft's nose to move to the pilot's right or left. Pushing the right rudder pedal will tilt the rudder to the right. The pilot will see the nose of the aircraft turn to the right.

yearlong mission or one-year mission

Zarya module
Also known as the functional cargo block, Zarya was the first module of the International Space Station. It was launched on a Russian Proton rocket in November 1998 and provided electrical power, storage, propulsion and guidance while other modules with more functionality were built. Zarya is now used for storage. Zayra is not an acronym; it is a Russian word meaning "dawn" because it signified the dawn of a new era of international cooperation in space. See International Space Station.

zero gravity
A term commonly applied to a condition of free fall within a gravitational field in which the weight of an object is reduced compared to its weight at rest on Earth. A term used synonymously with microgravity and weightlessness.

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Zvezda service module
Zvezda provides some of the International Space Station's life support systems as well as living quarters for two crew members. Zvezda launched on a Proton rocket in July 2000. Zvezda is not an acronym but the Russian word meaning “star.” See International Space Station.

APPENDICES

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Guidelines

Release of Public Information

This document outlines operating procedures for public affairs officers at NASA Headquarters and the agency's field centers regarding the release of public information from NASA. It supports NASA's Office of Communications Policy for the Release of Public Information. This document includes information about:

(A) Planning
(B) Proper release point and format
(C) Review and approval
(D) Release of information by external institutions, contractors, etc.
(E) Responsibility of headquarters mission directorates

These procedures govern the release of public information, which is defined as information in any form provided to news and information media, especially information that has the potential to generate significant media or public interest or inquiry. Examples include, but are not limited to, news releases, media advisories, web articles, television programming and web postings.

Not included under this definition are scientific and technical reports, web postings designed for technical or scientific interchange, and technical information presented at professional meetings or in professional journals. References to "mission directorates" and "mission directorate public affairs officers" in this document also include other NASA offices served by public affairs operations, such as education, external relations, facilities, etc.

(A) Planning

Step A1
Each headquarters public affairs officer assigned to a mission directorate or other NASA function (education, external relations, etc.) will coordinate as frequently as necessary (daily or weekly) among appropriate centers to support the release of public information and media product activities.

Step A2
Center public affairs directors or their designees will maintain a planning calendar of upcoming center media products and events and will coordinate this information with the mission directorate public affairs officers.

Step A3
The associate administrator for communications, or designee, will maintain a planning calendar of upcoming media products and events agencywide. Currently, this calendar is hosted in SharePoint and available to communications professionals across the agency. The associate administrator for communications, or designee, also will distribute this information to center and headquarters communications employees on a regular basis.

(B) Proper Release Point and Format

Step B1
Under the supervision and concurrence of the center public affairs director, the initiating center public affairs officer will (1) make an initial assessment of the relative news value of a topic; (2) recommend to the lead mission directorate public affairs officer a release format (news release, status report, media teleconference, NASA Science Update, news conference, web article, social media activity, opinion editorial, letter to the editor, etc.); and (3) recommend the release point (headquarters or center-regional).

For releases involving the science community, the release draft requires the concurrence of appropriate personnel including the division director and/or program executive/scientist. Center public affairs officers should notify their headquarters counterparts immediately of any future release being drafted.

For releases involving space operations, aeronautics and education communities the release draft will involve the concurrence of appropriate personnel such as the lead engineer/program manager and other concurrences as identified by the center public affairs director.

Step B2
The associate administrator for communications, or designee, shall make final decisions in a timely manner on news value, format, release point (headquarters or center-regional), and timing of the release.

Centers may, without the full coordination of headquarters, issue public information that is institutional in nature, of local interest, or after consultation with the headquarters public affairs officer and program/project officials, or has been deemed not to be a headquarters release. However, the center public affairs director is required to provide proper notification to the NASA Office of Communications at headquarters prior to release. (See NASA Public Affairs Policy, Public Information Coordination and Concurrence, Paragraph D).

(C) Review and Approval

Step C1
The center public affairs office is responsible for concurrence by the appropriate center officials prior to forwarding final documents to headquarters. The mission directorate public affairs officer is responsible for coordinating a timely headquarters review and approval process, which includes review and approval by the mission directorate point of contact and review by the headquarters public affairs newsroom.

Coordination and approval of all media products will be completed within three working days of receipt by headquarters, unless exceptions are agreed upon in advance by senior management of the mission directorate. Two days will be allocated for review

and approval by the mission directorate point of contact and one day will be allocated for review by the headquarters newsroom.

It is the responsibility of the mission directorate public affairs officer to track the progress of media products from the time they are sent to headquarters by a center public affairs office until release. If a media product cannot be processed and issued within the three-working-day time period, the assistant administrator of public affairs, press secretary and the center public affairs director will be notified of the reason(s) by the mission directorate public affairs officer.

- After a media product has been drafted and cleared by the appropriate center parties, the center public affairs office will send the draft product to the appropriate mission directorate public affairs officer.
- The mission directorate public affairs officer is responsible for coordinating the review and approval by mission directorate point of contact.
- The headquarters mission directorate point of contact is responsible for accuracy of scientific and technical information in media products and for resolving any issues with center officials regarding the content of the product.
- The center public affairs office may work directly with the mission directorate point of contact to resolve questions and issues regarding scientific content and accuracy.
- After the content has been reviewed and approved by the mission directorate point of contact, the center draft media product will be sent to the mission directorate public affairs officer for coordinating final approval. Mission directorates, working as appropriate with their assigned public affairs officers, will formulate and manage their own internal processes for approving content and ensuring accuracy of media products. Mission directorates will interface with public affairs through their designated point of contact for each media product.

Step C2
After the draft product has been approved by the mission directorate point of contact and concurred by the headquarters public affairs officer and center public affairs officer (who represents all interested center parties) the product is forwarded to the headquarters newsroom. The newsroom reviews the draft for clarity, grammar, spelling and conformity to AP and NASA styles.

- The newsroom will confer with the assigned center and headquarters public affairs office on any questions or edits and, when necessary, will direct the responsible public affairs office to correct any media product that is judged to be unclear or contains unfamiliar terminology, acronyms, industry jargon or “NASA-speak.”
- Changes in the product made by the newsroom must be concurred by the center public affairs office (representing all interested center parties) and the headquarters mission directorate point of contact.

Step C3
The newsroom issues the final approved version of the media product at the agreed-upon date/time.

Occasional media products resulting from breaking news events may be released by a center without review by headquarters, provided the center has informed headquarters in advance of the need for rapid release and the associate administrator for communications has concurred.

Dispute Resolution
Consistent with NASA's public affairs policy, any disputes over newsworthiness, content or timing of release of a NASA media product will be resolved by the associate administrator for communications in consultation with the appropriate mission directorate associate administrator, center director and center public affairs director. Further appeals may be made to the associate administrator of communications, deputy administrator and administrator.

The mission directorate associate administrator shall be the final arbiter of disputes regarding the technical or scientific accuracy of information.

(D) Release of Information by External Institutions, Contractors, etc.

If a media product is prepared by an outside institution under contract to NASA (e.g., through a mission principal investigator or contractor responsible for a spacecraft or instrument), that institution's public affairs officer will inform NASA Headquarters or the relevant center of the pending release of the media product at least seven to 10 working days in advance of release.

Media products prepared or issued by outside institutions may focus on the activities of those institutions but may not announce activities conducted by NASA – that is the job of NASA public affairs, not outside institutions. No entity other than NASA public affairs is authorized to issue news releases or other media products on behalf of NASA without advance permission from the NASA associate administrator for communications or his/her designee.

Joint media products, such as joint news releases, must be coordinated with and approved in advance by the NASA Headquarters Office of Communications.

Note:
The process outlined here does not override any existing contractual or Space Act Agreement or obligation for which the process for release of media products is covered under a contract or Space Act Agreement with NASA. No such agreements shall be entered into by anyone in NASA without approval of the associate administrator for communications or his/her designee.

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(E) Responsibility of Headquarters Mission Directorates

Because of the volume of public information requiring coordination through headquarters, the mission directorate associate administrator or his/her designee will serve as the single point of contact for public affairs officers to coordinate and approve media products. The appropriate mission directorate associate administrator or designee will ensure all public information for release is technically and scientifically accurate. The mission directorate associate administrator shall be the final arbiter of disputes regarding the technical or scientific accuracy of information.

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Writing Communications Products

NASA news releases and other communications products should tell a timely story about the agency's missions, activities or accomplishments in a simple, compelling way. They should be interesting and easily understandable to the average high school educated person.

Make a strategic assessment about what's the best way (news release, web article, social media posting, etc.) to communicate your story before developing a communications product(s). Historically, NASA primarily used releases to communicate our news. But, with NASA.gov, NASA Television and social media, a news release isn't the only, or necessarily the best, option. The goal is to use the appropriate product(s) to communicate NASA's news and information. As a rule of thumb, agency-level news releases from NASA Headquarters should be issued for major announcements, discoveries and activities. Right-size your products to reach the widest audience.

The production of communications products should involve as few people and as little time as appropriate. Avoid having "too many cooks in the kitchen."

Just because it can be abbreviated...
Do not capitalize words because abbreviations and acronyms come from them (example: do not capitalize "solid rocket booster" because of the SRB abbreviation). Only capitalize proper nouns as defined by the dictionary or AP style. (Things such as the "mobile launcher" is not a proper noun.)

Earth, Moon, Sun
Contrary to AP style, when referring to Earth's Sun and Moon, we do capitalize "Moon" and "Sun" in communications products. Also capitalize Earth (it is the proper name of a planet, like Mars). Do not say "*the* Earth" – just say "Earth." (You wouldn't say "the Mars.")

Agency, nation, department, etc.
Do not capitalize words like agency, nation, department, mission directorate or administration – even if lawyers and bureaucrats insist on it. It violates AP style.

Editorializing and Self-Congratulating
Do not editorialize or use self-congratulatory language. For example, do not characterize a spacewalk as "daring" or "dangerous." Describe things factually. If things are described well, readers easily can decide for themselves whether they are daring or dangerous.

Never, under any circumstances, insert any personal, political, ideological or religious opinions or beliefs into NASA news media products. NASA Office of Communications deals strictly with facts, not opinions, religious beliefs or ideologies.

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Communications Priorities
Products should support communications priorities and reflect associated messaging. If your content doesn't directly relate to a communication priority, look for how it ties to one or more of the communications priorities at a broad level. This messaging should be mentioned up top (including headline and lead if it makes sense). Being specific helps. Explaining "here's how this thing will help us get to Mars" is more effective than simply adding "as part of Journey to Mars" to a headline.

Plain Language
Always remember the audience for communications products is the media and general public, not scientists, engineers and program managers. Media products are not scientific papers, legislative reports or legal documents. Write them in common layman's language.

Avoid agency or industry jargon or acronyms. Spell out all terms that are not part of everyday language. We are trying to educate the public about our projects and accomplishments, not our internal terminology. In addition, do not use acronyms, abbreviations or jargon just because the scientific or engineering community uses them or likes them. These communities are not your audience. Your audience is the general public, which does not talk in code.

Consider how you might explain the concept or tell the story to a friend or relative outside of the space industry that may be unfamiliar what you're describing. Use plain language to explain specific hardware parts and scientific experiments to the general population, and avoid jargon and technical language. It's never "dumbing down," it's explaining. Be sure to include the context of the bigger picture for why it matters and how it relates to NASA's larger goals (campaign messaging helps here too). In other words, answer the "so what?" question within the first couple of paragraphs.

Common Phrases
Use phrases specific to programs and communication priorities consistently across products in addition to what is in the NASA Stylebook.

Active Voice
Use active voice in all content, and avoid passive voice.

Legacy References
Limit references to NASA's historical legacy, such as shuttle or Apollo, unless directly relevant in some way, and refrain from comparing capabilities of future and past missions. NASA has a rich history, but focus on forward-looking content to tell the story of capabilities we are building for the future rather than framing content in terms of the past.

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Center References
Write web articles with the agency in mind. Unless for use exclusively by a center or integral to the story, center references can be integrated into quotes or included near the end of the article. Readers are most interested in the work we are doing, and a bit in who is doing it on the individual “human interest” level, but how it is managed or funded organizationally is generally secondary.

There are likely exceptions to many of these, but they should be deliberate and limited.

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
Do not use terms such as “yesterday” and “tomorrow” except when part of a quote. Use "today" only in media advisories for events taking place on the same day the advisory is published. In a break from AP style, to help avoid confusing the reader when referring to upcoming activities, use the day of the week and the day of the month on first reference. For activities taking place on the same day as the release is being issued, only use the day of the week without the date. Such as, "NASA announced Tuesday a new Mars mission for 2020," when the release is being issued on Tuesday. Do not use the year for dates within one year of the publication date of a news release, unless it is needed to clarify exactly when an activity will take place; use proper verb tense to avoid confusion.

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Editing Communications Products

News products are edited to ensure proper and consistent accuracy, style, proper grammar and clarity. Getting releases edited accurately and quickly is the editor's top priority.

Read a news release or other communications product completely before making any edits. Initial questions often can be answered if you just keep reading.

Speed is important, but not at the expense of accuracy. Do not make edits that distort the meaning or add mistakes. If you have any doubt about the meaning, ask the writer. If you make edits that possibly could change the meaning in any way, check with the writer. It is easy to accidentally change the meaning of something when editing. Be careful and always double-check. Your job is to improve things, not make them worse. Ensure you understand what the product is saying before making edits. If you are confused, go back and ask the original writer. If the writer does not know, go back to the original source of the information.

Do not re-write the release just to make it "sound better" to you. If it is already clear, do not change it. The mark of a good editor is knowing when to leave something alone.

If the writer has inserted any political, personal, ideological or religious beliefs or opinions, take them out and immediately report the incident to the associate administrator for communications, the deputy associate administrator for communications or the director of news and media engagement at NASA Headquarters.

Do not issue (or post to the web) any news release or other communications product you have edited alone. Always send the edited release back to the writers for their review before issuing it. Always have a "second set of eyes" proofread anything you edit.

Provide the originating public affairs officer with a final version of the release for his or her review prior to issuance for proof reading and to confirm no inadvertent errors were introduced during the editing process. This provides a "heads up" and an additional check for accuracy.

Remember: You are your own worst editor.

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General Editing Checklist

- ☐ Ensure all dates, times, titles, name spellings, addresses, etc., are correct and consistent with AP and NASA style. Double-check all numbers.
- ☐ Double-check spelling in headlines, as well as the names and phone numbers of contact people, web addresses and other information not in the main body of the media product. Test all external points of contact by sending an email and making a phone call with the provided information. When in doubt, ask the writer.
- ☐ Ensure verbs are active whenever possible (“He explained the process,” rather than “the process was explained.”) Do not insert modifiers into multiple-word verbs. Keep compound verbs together (“he also will go” instead of “he will also go”).
- ☐ Get rid of acronyms, except those commonly accepted in everyday layman’s language. As a general rule, use commonly understood terms such as “rocket” instead of launch vehicle, and "spacecraft" instead of vehicle.
- ☐ Ensure all scientific or engineering terminology either is put into simple terms or clearly explained. If it is not, ask the original writer or source of information to provide language that will explain it simply and clearly in a way that does not alter the meaning.

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News Releases and Media Advisories

NASA news releases cover a broad range of topics and circumstances, and these guidelines should be followed closely whenever practical. NASA public affairs officers are expected to use their judgment and consult their supervisors on any significant deviations from these guidelines.

NASA News Releases

- Follow Associated Press and NASA communications style.
- Should not exceed 650 words. (Longer releases should be cleared in advance with the NASA Headquarters newsroom.)
- Should have a one-line headline that clearly states the theme of the release. (See best practice for headlines.)
- Should have “NASA” somewhere in the lead sentences.

Lead / Body of Release

The lead should be limited to 25-30 words, in most cases, and should use active verbs. Pick the most relevant point and relate it to NASA. Ensure the information in the release answers the basic questions of “who, what, when, where, why and how.” (See best practices for leads.)

> Example:
> NASA's Kepler mission scientists have discovered a new planetary system that is home to the smallest planet yet found around a star similar to our Sun.

Remaining paragraphs should be 50 to 100 words each and written in an “inverted pyramid” style (the broad base at the top represents the most newsworthy information, the narrow tip at the bottom represents the least newsworthy).

Use of Quotations

Under most circumstances, limit releases to three quotes. Limit each quote to two short sentences, or, in rare circumstances, three. Typically, the first quote should comprise the second or third paragraph of the release, and it should be the ranking NASA official's statement. Prioritize the other quotes on content and what they contribute to the release. Quotes should be written similar to a sound bite:

> Example:
> "Every spinoff is a reminder of NASA's return on investment to the taxpayer," said NASA Chief Technologist David Miller. "Great ideas from NASA have a way of returning real benefits back to individuals, industries and our new technology economy."

Do not include quotes that are meaningless, gratuitous or self-congratulatory, or whose sole purpose is to add someone's name to a release. Also avoid quotes not directly related to the subject matter of the release. (See best practices for quotes.)

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Time Elements
Times for events in the United States should be listed based on where the activities take place, such as where a launch occurs or where a news conference is held. For launches or activities outside the United States, give the time in Eastern when it will be covered live on NASA Television, per AP television coverage guidance. If it will not be carried on NASA TV, give the time in the U.S. based on which NASA center is most responsible, followed by the local time. To be consistent with AP style and the major television networks, Eastern time should be considered the default for all events broadcast on NASA Television. The local time can be indicated as such in a parentheses. This is to benefit a nationwide audience and be closer in sync with AP Style. NASA's Ames Research Center, Silicon Valley, California, will hold a news conference at 4 p.m. EST (1 p.m. PST), which will be carried live on NASA Television.

For events "off-planet," such as activities on the International Space Station, Moon and planetary events that will be carried live on NASA TV, use Eastern time. If it will not be carried live on NASA TV, use the time where the mission control center in charge of the event is located.

Unless the product is an advisory about an event happening on the same day, use days of the week, not today, tomorrow or tonight, and the date for upcoming events within the next month.

Single Version
Do not produce separate versions of a release. Headquarters and centers will agree on a single version for the entire agency. If circumstances warrant the release of additional information locally, add the information at the bottom and leave the agreed-upon text intact. Centers are able add visual elements and/or issue HQ products to their listserv without creating a duplicate version, if coordinated with the HQ newsroom or web team.

Corrections
From time to time, it becomes necessary to update a news product online. NASA communications practice is to add an editor’s note at the top of a product. See Corrections and Updates to Releases, Advisories and Web Articles for more information and examples.

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Release/Advisory Template

Jan. 5, 2020

RELEASE: 20-XXX (or) **MEDIA ADVISORY: M18-XXX** (or) **CONTRACT RELEASE: C18-XXX** (BOLD FACE CAPS)

NASA Issues Product Format Guidance (Upper and lowercase/Bold Face/Capitalize Each Word/Active Voice)

News releases should not exceed 650 words without prior approval. The headline and lead graph should include the word NASA, as appropriate. Shorter and punchy lead sentences are preferred.

We use AP and NASA Stylebooks for all products; default to AP style for items not addressed by the NASA Stylebook.

Products start immediately below the top margin with the date of the release. Note the date placement is flush left. Margins are one inch on all sides of the page. Paragraphs are flush left. Line spacing is single, with 0 points before and after. Use Arial 12-point normal font. Use only one space after periods.

Make sure your word software is up to date and uses generic text characters of quotation marks, etc. Before submitting your release, click the paragraph symbol in Word to reveal and remove all hidden formatting such as extra bullets at the beginning of lines, degree symbols in place of spaces, etc.

Points of contacts are at the bottom of releases after the -end-. Contacts should be limited to three people, in most cases. Do not count the public affairs contacts at the bottom of the page in the 650-word limit. List secondary POCs in the body of the release in paragraph form, if necessary. Each listed contact must have a working phone number and working email address. Double-check phones and emails of any external contacts before submitting your release to the newsroom; double-check your own for typos, as well.

If the product is an advisory for NASA TV coverage, the standard verbiage is “will air on NASA Television and the agency’s website.” The word “website” should hyperlink to https://www.nasa.gov/live, rather than https://www.nasa.gov/nasatv. The NASA TV URL should be used at the bottom of products when directing readers to NASA TV downlink, schedule and streaming video information.

When it is necessary to list public affairs contacts in the text of a release, write POC references in the following order and style: name, email address, phone. Do not make the phone number bold.

Note the header placement is flush left and font is bold. NASA uses "release", "media advisory" and "contract release" in the header.

The headline must reflect NASA's reason for issuing the release. It should be one line long and not the first sentence of the lead. Headlines typically don't contain time/date element or the word "to." Note the headline placement is flush left and the headline is bold, but not all caps.

Use inverted pyramid construction for all releases. Typically limit the lead paragraph to 25-30 words. The second or third paragraph must be a "nut graph" explaining why the subject of the release is important to the public. The remaining paragraphs of the release should contain details supporting the lead, nut graph and quote. Make sure every fact in the lead is supported in the quote or in the details.

The first quote should appear immediately after the nut graph, and no lower than the fourth paragraph. Limit quotes to two or three sentences each. The first quote in the release must be attributed to the highest-ranking NASA official mentioned in the release, and must provide context for the entire story. Do not include quotes that are meaningless, gratuitous, or whose sole purpose is to add someone's name to a release. No release should contain more than three or four quotes.

Use of the word "today" as a time element is permissible only in media advisories for events happening on the same day the advisory is issued. In all other instances, write time element references in the following order: time, date and place. For example, write "10 a.m. EDT Thursday, July 11, at NASA Headquarters." Use the day and date in such references to upcoming activities; do not use the year unless clarity is required. Never use the word "tomorrow."

Avoid using "Note to Editors" remarks at the end of a news release. Include the information as part of the release or issue a separate media advisory.

We do not use courtesy titles. Refer to the AP stylebook. Do not capitalize "administrator" when used in any context after name, including tabular material. (NASA Administrator Charles Bolden; Charles Bolden, NASA administrator.) Do not capitalize "agency" or "federal" unless either word is part of a proper name.

Review AP for noting academic and medical credentials. When noting academic and other institutions in releases, use the proper city and state for the location to ensure clarity. (Smith performed the research at Bowdoin College in Penobscot, Maine.) Boilerplate text, when used, should be last paragraph of the release. Boilerplates must be written in active voice, and all the information contained in them must be relevant to the topic of the release. The newsroom will exercise editorial judgment regarding the final content of any boilerplate language and its placement in the release.

Social media boilerplate language such as Twitter hashtags and Facebook URLs should be presented in paragraph form, using same style conventions applied to public affairs

POC information contained in the text of a release. Social medial boilerplate language does count toward the 650-word limit.

When appropriate, include one or more concluding URL blurbs. The first link almost always should be a NASA link. Whenever possible, the last link should be a NASA link. Links to corporate sites or other non-NASA sites are not permitted without prior approval. As a reminder, we cannot link to sites that solicit donations.

The format for Internet URLs is bold, Arial 12 point normal font. The URL must be centered and include "http." Use go.nasa.gov to shorten complex NASA URLs. For outside NASA organizations, substitute the shortened reference in place of the long one. It is permissible, when necessary, to include URLs in the text of a release instead of at the bottom. Formatting requirements are the same.

URLs do count toward the 650-word limit. Releases should not contain more than three URL blurbs without prior permission. All URLs must be working when the release is published. In the event an inactive URL is discovered in a release, the newsroom will delete the URL in order to publish as scheduled or delay publication until the link is active.

Per AP starting in 2014, state names are spelled out in the body of the release. But state names should be abbreviated in the points of contact section.

As part of the effort to blend the writing styles of news releases and web articles, the conservative use of contractions in news release is permitted, when appropriate. Historically, contractions have only been used in releases when part of a quote.
Use "-end-" at the end of releases.

Contact the NASA Headquarters newsroom if you have any questions about format.

For information about NASA and agency programs, visit:

https://www.nasa.gov

NASA Television should be written out on first reference. The general NASA TV blurb is For NASA TV downlink, schedule and streaming video information, visit:

https://www.nasa.gov/nasatv

-end-

POC / Alternate POC *(if applicable)*
Headquarters, Washington
202-358-1234 / 5678
poc@nasa.gov / altpoc@nasa.gov

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Contract Award News Releases

Process for contracts less than $30 million
The process for releases announcing contracts under $30 million is determined by the center communications and procurement offices, however, this process must include the following:

1. Send the draft contract release to the appropriate public affairs officer at headquarters for review. You can find the best contact in the NASA Communications Directory.
2. Put the contract release on the SharePoint calendar.

Process for contracts valued at $30 million or more
Two processes should occur in tandem. An Administrator's Notification of Significant Contract Award (ANOSCA) is routed from the center procurement office for signature by the Office of the Administrator. At the same time, the center communications office should work with headquarters to produce a news release. Here are the two processes in detail:

Release

1. The center communications office should provide a draft contract release to the appropriate HQ PAO.
2. The HQ PAO reviews the release then sends to the HQ Newsroom for review.
    a. The HQ PAO also should put the contract release on the SharePoint Calendar.
    b. Once the Newsroom review process is finished, the release goes back to the HQ PAO, who then routes it through their office/mission directorate for concurrence.
    c. Office/mission directorate edits are then sent to the HQ Newsroom, incorporated into the final product and returned to the center POC.
3. The HQ Newsroom provides the final contract release to the HQ Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs to use for congressional notifications.
4. At 4 p.m. ET on the day of notification, OLIA sends the release to the Hill and the HQ Newsroom issues the release. If the award is particularly sensitive, OCOMM will wait one hour after Hill notifications, then issue the release.
5. Around the same time, or as soon as possible, Procurement posts an Award Notice to FedBizOpps (see example).

ANOSCA

1. Center procurement forwards the ANOSCA to HQ Procurement, which then notifies OCOMM (Bob Jacobs, Allard Beutel and Karen Northon) and HQ OLIA that the ANOSCA has been received and is being processed.
2. Once the ANOSCA is signed by the administrator or representative, HQ procurement notifies OLIA and OCOMM that the ANOSCA is signed and we can proceed with the award.

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Common Procurement Terminology

8(a) contract: A contract with the Small Business Administration under a program established by Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act. Under that program, the Small Business Administration is authorized to enter into all types of contracts with other agencies and let subcontracts for performing those contracts to firms eligible for program participation.

cost-reimbursement contract: A contract that provides for payment of allowable incurred costs, to the extent prescribed in the contract. These contracts establish an estimate of total cost for the purpose of obligating funds and establishing a ceiling that the contractor may not exceed (except at its own risk) without the approval of the contracting officer.

cost-plus-award-fee contract: A cost-reimbursement contract that provides for a fee consisting of:

a. A base amount fixed at inception of the contract and
b. An award amount that the contractor may earn in whole or in part during performance and that is sufficient to provide motivation for excellence in such areas as quality, timeliness, technical ingenuity, and cost-effective management.

cost-plus-fixed-fee: A cost-reimbursement contract that provides for payment to the contractor of a negotiated fee that is fixed at the inception of the contract. The fixed fee does not vary with actual cost, but may be adjusted as a result of changes in the work to be performed under the contract. This contract type permits contracting for efforts that might otherwise present too great a risk to contractors, but it provides the contractor only a minimum incentive to control costs.

cost-plus-incentive fee: A cost-reimbursement contract that provides for the initially negotiated fee to be adjusted later by a formula, based on the relationship of total allowable costs to total target costs. This contract type specifies a target cost, a target fee, minimum and maximum fees, and a fee adjustment formula. After contract performance, the fee payable to the contractor is determined in accordance with the formula.

delivery order contract: A contract for supplies that does not procure or specify a firm quantity of supplies (other than a minimum or maximum quantity) and that provides for the issuance of orders for the delivery of supplies during the period of the contract.

firm fixed-price contract: A contract that provides for a price that is not subject to any adjustment on the basis of Contract the contractor’s cost experience in performing the contract.

firm fixed-price, level-of-effort term contract: Also referred to as fixed-price-level-of-effort contract. A contract that requires:

a. The contractor to provide a specified level of effort, over a stated period of time, on work that can be stated only in general terms; and
b. The Government to pay the contractor a fixed dollar amount.

fixed-price contract with award fee: Also referred to as fixed-price award-fee contract. A contract that provides for:

a. A fixed price (including normal profit) for the contract effort. This price will be paid for satisfactory contract performance
b. An award fee that will be paid (if earned) will be paid in addition to that fixed price; and
c. Periodic evaluation of the contractor's performance against an award-fee plan to determine the amount of fee (if any) due the contractor.

fixed-price contract with economic price adjustment: A contract that provides for upward and downward revision of the stated contract price upon the occurrence of specified contingencies. Economic price adjustments may be based on:

a. Established prices;
b. Actual costs of labor or material; or
c. Cost indexes of labor or material.

fixed-price incentive contract: A fixed-price contract that provides for adjusting profit and establishing the final contract price by application of a formula based on the relationship of total final negotiated cost to total target cost. The final price is subject to a price ceiling, negotiated at the outset.

full and open competition: All responsible sources are permitted to compete for a contract action.

indefinite-delivery: A contract that may be used to acquire supplies and/or services when the exact times of future deliveries are not known at the time of contract award.

indefinite-quantity: A contract that provides for an indefinite quantity, within stated limits (minimum and maximum), of supplies or services to be furnished during a fixed period, with deliveries or performance to be scheduled by placing orders with the contractor.

indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity: A contract that may be used to acquire supplies and/or services when the exact times *and* exact quantities of future deliveries are not known at the time of contract award.

(Additional terms are available on the Federal Acquisition Institute website at: https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/pdfss/glossary.pdf. The terms in this list do not necessarily reflect proper capitalization. Please only capitalize terms that are proper names.)

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Contract Release Sample

Jan. 10, 2020

CONTRACT RELEASE: C20-002

NASA Awards Engineering, Research Support Contract

NASA has selected HX5, LLC of Fort Walton Beach, Florida, to perform engineering, research and scientific support at NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland.

The Glenn Engineering and Research Support (GEARS) contract is a cost plus fixed fee/award term contract includes an indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity provision and has a maximum potential value of approximately $376.8 million. The performance period begins April 1 and will extend seven years, with a two-year base period, a two-year option, a one-year option and a two-year award term.

GEARS will provide engineering, research and scientific support for communications and intelligent systems, power, propulsion, materials and structures, and systems engineering and architecture. Work under the contract includes facilities engineering, test engineering, manufacturing engineering, project management, and data management and scheduling support. HX5 also will support fundamental research on space or gravity-dependent combustion and fluid systems.

For information about NASA and other agency programs, visit:

https://www.nasa.gov

-end-

Karen Northon
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Jan Wittry
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216-433-5466
jan.m.wittry-1@nasa.gov

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Web Articles

All guidelines and best practices apply to web content, as to everything else. However, there are a few additional considerations for web articles:

- Readers scan before deciding to read. Include in the headlines and subheads words that are likely to pull the reader in: Mars, space travel, supersonic flight, etc. Less successful: study, consider, partnership, addresses, hails, meets, facilities, long-term.
- Use multiple compelling and relevant graphics and videos to help tell the story. Describe, in the caption, what the user is seeing clearly and relate it to the story.
- Unless the article is a historical profile, portraits and group photos don't generally add to the story because readers aren't as interested in the "who" as the "what," "how" and "why."

The Statistics
The mean duration of an individual session on NASA.gov is a little more than **two minutes**, and the median duration is **10 seconds or less**. Various studies[1] report the average K-12 student reads **200 words per minute** (wpm) and the average adult reads **300 wpm**.

Context
As good as we are at telling a discrete story, we sometimes struggle to provide a "big picture." The web offers an ideal medium to add context by linking to relevant materials. A story on a development milestone for a particular mission can link back to an explainer on the mission's goals, or to a historical piece on an earlier related mission.

We also can provide context through a standard explanation of something used in all relevant stories. Any story on project X can include a boilerplate on what project X is doing and how it relates to NASA's overall mission. But, boilerplate information can and often should be organically included in the copy without adding at the end in one graph.

When writing a historical piece, always help the reader out by relating the historical story to programs still ongoing at NASA.

Search Engine Optimization
Obviously for people to read your content, they have to find it. The largest share of visitors get to https://www.nasa.gov via Google or other search engines. Make sure your page title and headline (the same thing in Drupal, unless you change one) use terms people are likely to use to search for your content.

[1] Carver, Ronald P. "Silent Reading Rates in Grade Equivalents." *Journal of Reading Behavior*, XXI, No. 2, 1989, pp. 155–166. *Sage Publishing*, journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10862968909547667.

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Sample Web Article

Sign of Progress: Street Renaming Puts NASA Headquarters on Hidden Figures Way

Visitors to NASA's headquarters in Washington, D.C., will forevermore be reminded of the African-American women who were essential to the success of early spaceflight. On Aug. 23, 2018, Sens. Ted Cruz, Ed Markey, John Thune, and Bill Nelson introduced a bipartisan bill to designate the street in front of NASA Headquarters as Hidden Figures Way. On Wednesday, NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine was joined by Sen. Cruz, D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson, and author Margot Lee Shetterly to make that designation official.

The renaming honors Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, who were featured in Shetterly's book – and the subsequent movie – Hidden Figures, as well as all women who honorably serve their country, advancing equality, and contributing to the United States space program.

"I just want to say these were the three hidden figures in a very prominent book that became a magnificent movie that started a movement that brought all of us here today," Bridenstine said. "Here we are, 50 years after the landing of the Apollo 11 Moon lander, celebrating those figures who were, at the time, not celebrated."

Members of the Johnson, Jackson and Vaughan families, as well as Christine Darden, a mathematician who worked alongside these esteemed women at NASA, were surrounded by a large crowd gathered at the corner of 3rd and E Street SW to share in the momentous event.

"A street sign is a piece of metal, that's under the wind, sun, rain, snow. But a street sign's a lot more than that," Cruz said. "Because for years, and then decades, and then centuries, when little girls and little boys come to see NASA, they're going to look up and see that sign, and they're going to say 'Hidden Figures? What's that? What does that mean?' And that, in turn, is going to prompt a story – a story about the unlimited human potential of all of us."

Mendelson, who introduced the renaming bill for the city council in September 2018, also noted the integral role NASA's human computers of the Apollo era played in developing America's space program, and the important lessons we take from history, particularly lessons on race in this country.

"It's not just a story of individuals but it's also a story of, and acknowledges, the racism in this country and how we still struggle to deal with that and to overcome it," he said. The story that sparked the movement Bridenstine spoke of was shared with the world by an author who has her own close ties to NASA. Shetterly's father, whose birthday also was Wednesday, spent his entire career at NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia, as an atmospheric research scientist.

“Naming this street Hidden Figures Way serves to remind us, and everyone who comes here, of the standard that was set by these women, with their commitment to science and their embodiment of the values of equality, justice and humanity,” Shetterly said. “But, let it also remind us of the Hidden Figures way, which is to open our eyes to contribution of the people around us so that their names, too, are the ones that we remember at the end of the story.”

(View this web article, with images, online at: https://www.nasa.gov/feature/sign-of-progress-street-renaming-puts-nasa-headquarters-on-hidden-figures-way.)

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Corrections and Updates to Releases, Advisories and Web Articles

From time to time, it becomes necessary to update a news product online. NASA communications practice is to add an editor's note at the top of a product if:

(a) Information in the product has changed and an updated product was issued

At the top of the *original* product, add an editor's note that includes a link back to the original story.

Editor's note: An update to this story, [title with link], was published on [date].

(b) The product is an updated version of a previously issued/posted product

At the top of the updated version, link back to the original story:

Editor's note: This story updates [title with link], published on [date].

(c) Information in the product has changed and the editor's note serves as the sole source of updated information

Editor's Note: This media advisory was updated Oct. 1 to reflect the spacewalk news briefing now is at 2 p.m. EDT Friday, Oct. 4.

Be very careful about revising old stories, even if recent developments have made them factually incorrect. Such editing could leave NASA open to accusations of trying to rewrite the historical record. It's much better for NASA and the user to leave older stories online as they were published, with appropriate editor's notes and links, than to leave the user wondering about NASA's integrity.

Never revise a news release issued by NASA Headquarters. They are official records, paper copies of which are shipped to the National Archives. If you believe something should be changed in a news release, contact the NASA Headquarters newsroom, 202-358-1600.

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Image Captions

Image Features
The extended captions used for image features

Style
Captions should be written following the same guidelines as all NASA media products, including AP style and the NASA Stylebook.

The first sentence of a photo caption should include:

1. **Who** – List the titles and names of people in an image in order from left to right. e.g. "title name, left, title name, center, and title name." In this example, no need to say "right" for last, it is assumed or you may skip "center" and just use "right" for last. Or if larger group: "title name, left, title name, title name, title name, and title name, right."

   Example –

   Expedition 53 flight engineer Joe Acaba of NASA, left, Soyuz Commander Alexander Misurkin of Roscosmos, center, and Mark Vande Hei of NASA pose for a photograph ahead of their launch on a Soyuz rocket, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2017, Building 254, Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan. Acaba, Misurkin, and Vande Hei will spend approximately five and half months on the International Space Station.

2. **Who** – Ages should be given for children.

   Example –

   Twelve-year-old Alex Frye checks his special viewing glasses prior to viewing the partial solar eclipse from a highway overpass in Arlington, Virginia, Thursday, Oct. 23, 2014.

3. **What** – Briefly explain what's happening in the image, in the present tense.

4. **Where** – Location where it was taken, following AP style for the city and state as appropriate.

5. **When** – First sentence should include the date, including the day of the week – e.g., Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2008. Put a comma after the year if the date doesn't come at the end of the sentence. Time should be given as local and with reference to U.S. time zone releasing. Same is true for planetary missions – they should have reference to local/U.S. time.

Example –

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, right, is shown the Mars 2020 spacecraft descent stage from inside the Spacecraft Assembly Facility by JPL Director Michael Watkins, left, and NASA Mars Exploration Manager Li Fuk at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Saturday, April 28, 2018, in Southern California.

Example where time is given, but not in first sentence –

On a part of Vera Rubin Ridge, where rover-team researchers sought to determine whether dust coatings are hiding rocks' hematite content, the Mast Camera on NASA's Curiosity Mars rover took this image of a rock surface that had been brushed with the rover's Dust Removal Tool. The image was taken on Sept. 17, 2017, during the 1,819th Martian day, or sol, of Curiosity's work on Mars.

If a caption is longer than one concise sentence, the second sentence of the caption should give context to the news event or describe why the photo is significant. Whenever possible, keep captions to no more than two sentences, while including the relevant information.

Illustrations

Captions for illustrations should explain what is depicted in the image and the significance of the image.

Credits/Byline

The format for image credits is: Organization/Photographer (or Illustrator)

✓ NASA/Mark Sowa

✗ NASA/JSC/Mark Sowa

If the name of the photographer or illustrator is not available, use only the organization name.

*If the image is a screen grab from NASA TV, the credit should be NASA Television.

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NASA Imagery Editing Guidance

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration civilian and contractor personnel who produce, edit, and/or release visual information must maintain credibility when presenting visual imagery and information to the public. Any NASA or contractor photograph that is altered to deliberately mislead or deceive the public, media, or U.S. government is strictly prohibited. All personnel involved in the creation of NASA visual information shall work to meet the highest ethical standards followed by the agency, the news industry, and other visual dissemination media.

As visual information technology advances, it is imperative that NASA and contractor photographers maintain integrity by presenting imagery and other visual information as an accurate recording of a scene or event. Accepted industry practice allows for adjustments to images, such as color correction, exposure correction, and removal of dust spots, to ensure an accurate reproduction of the original scene. Editing of images beyond this should not happen, except in the rare instances when photographing around something or cropping it out can't be avoided.

Exaggerated use of adjustments, such as heavy dodging, burning, and color saturation, should be avoided. Cropping of an image in a way that alters the context or misrepresents the scene or event is not allowed. Digitally adding or removing elements of an image constitute misrepresentation and is prohibited.

All photo illustrations, portraits, and images produced in a studio environment should not mislead the viewer into believing they were spontaneous events. Composite images and photo illustrations should be clearly identified as such in the first sentence of the caption. Additionally, if a specialized method of image capture, such as a digital camera modified for infrared photography is used, denote the method used in the first sentence of the caption as well. Examples of captions noting these methods:

> *In this black and white infrared image, the Soyuz MS-09 rocket is launched with Expedition 56 Soyuz Commander Sergey Prokopyev of Roscosmos, flight engineer Serena Auñón-Chancellor of NASA, and flight engineer Alexander Gerst of ESA (European Space Agency), Wednesday, June 6, 2018, at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Prokopyev, Auñón-Chancellor, and Gerst will spend the next six months living and working aboard the International Space Station. Photo Credit: (NASA/Joel Kowsky)*
>
> *This composite image made from six frames shows the International Space Station, with a crew of six onboard, as it transits the Moon at roughly five miles per second, Saturday, Dec. 2, 2017, in Manchester Township, York County, Pennsylvania. Onboard are: NASA astronauts Joe Acaba, Mark Vande Hei, and Randy Bresnik; Russian cosmonauts Alexander Misurkin and Sergey Ryanzansky; and ESA astronaut Paolo Nespoli. Photo Credit: (NASA/Joel Kowsky)*

In rare instances where ITAR sensitive or proprietary hardware, or personally identifying information (PII), such as employee badges, are visible and cannot be cropped out or captured in such a way as to be avoided, it is permitted to blur those items. This editing should be done as minimally as possible across the image and should be clearly identified in the caption in plain language, e.g., “NOTE - Sensitive technical details have been digitally obscured in this photograph.” Whenever possible, photographers should make an effort to compose images in a way that does not show sensitive or proprietary information that would require portions of an image to be digitally obscured.

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NASA Television Video Files

NASA TV video files are resources for media which air on our media channel and are posted on our media resources web site. Note the distinction between “Video Files” (uppercase) as a specific product, and video files (lowercase) such as mp4, .mov, etc. that are created and shared.

Slate language should be drafted and approved by the relevant public affairs officers, with final approval at the communications enterprise/headquarters level. To expedite release of video files in time to be useful and relevant for media, Headquarters PAOs should review and respond as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after the request.

Package Content

All slates should be no more than one page.

Main Slate
(20seconds) – Use Arial font (20 point) and headquarters-provided background. (Fig.1)

1) Slug (matches news release)
2) One-to-two sentence description of item. Includes who, what, when, where, why.
3) Total running time (TRT)
4) Edited b-roll (Actual RT)
5) Interview(s) (Actual RT)
6) Additional b-roll (Actual RT)
7) Super
8) NASA
9) Center contact information
10) Headquarters contact information
11) NASA web address and links, i.e. "For more info, www.nasa.gov/shuttle"

(2 seconds black)

Edited B-roll Slate
(20 seconds) – Use Arial font (20 point) and headquarters-provided background. (Fig. 2)

1) Slug (matches news release) - edited b-roll
2) Run time (Actual RT)
3) Super
4) NASA
5) Center contact information
6) Headquarters contact information
7) NASA web address and links, i.e. "For more info, www.nasa.gov/station"

(2 seconds black)

Edited B-roll
(20seconds) – This should be your best available video, your "money shots," edited together for easy use by a television news editor or producer for a 20-30 second

voiceover. If applicable or possible, provide a variety of shots (wides, mediums, close-ups) to tell your story.
(2 seconds black)

Interview(s) Slate
(10 seconds) – Use Arial font (20 point) and headquarters-provided background. (Fig. 3)

- Slug (matches news release) - Interview(s)
- Interviews run time
- Name/Title/RT Interview 1
- Name/Title/RT Interview 2
- Name/Title/RT Interview 3
- Super
- NASA
- Center contact information
- Headquarters contact information
- NASA web address and links, i.e. "For more info, www.nasa.gov/mro"

(2 seconds black)

Interview(s)
(Maximum three, each no longer than 25 seconds) – Each interview "bite" (separated by one second of black) should be concise and to the point, compelling enough so a non-technical news producer would consider plugging it into his or her news show. It does not have to be long, just memorable. Short and to the point. Think of it as an exclamation point at the end of a sentence. (Avoid a lot of background information. That is for the video file web page.) It can sum up the importance of your story and why the public should care. If possible, get your interviewee to use a simile to illustrate the importance of the project (e.g., This telescope is kind of like a giant knife, cutting the galaxy like you would a loaf of bread. The fun is analyzing each of the slices!).
(2 seconds black)

Expanded/Additional B-roll Slate
(20 seconds) - Use Arial font (20 point) and headquarters-provided background. (Fig. 4)

1) Slug (matches news release) - expanded/additional b-roll
2) Run time
3) Super
4) NASA
5) Center contact information
6) Headquarters contact information
7) NASA web address and links, i.e. "For more info, "www.nasa.gov/rovers"

(2 seconds black)

Expanded/Additional B-roll
(3 minutes) – This is to accommodate producers, reporters, and editors working "long form" news packages. The 40 seconds of edited b-roll were your very best highlights; here, your shots can "breathe," go longer and deeper into your subject.
(5 seconds black)

Release of NASA Videos

- When planning and creating a video product, coordinate in advance with the Office of Communications and the digital services and news teams at the enterprise level at Headquarters. Notification of a completed product is not considered advanced coordination.
- Products that are not coordinated or given appropriate time for review and strategic planning may not be posted, broadcast, or shared on agency flagship accounts. This is to ensure content follows agency standards, contains appropriate, up-to-date messaging and also fits strategically with the calendar and release strategy of other agency products (i.e., not competing with ourselves)
- Editorial review with the agency digital team may include suggestions for changes to the content in order to approve for release. Products should not be delivered as 'finished' and unable to be changed, if necessary.
- Please work with public affairs officers and subject matter experts to assure content is accurate and timely (e.g., using the latest version of artwork or animation).
- Do not create a new series, branding, logos, messaging, tag lines, etc. without discussing with groups mentioned above. Remember, our strongest and primary brand is NASA and the "meatball" insignia.

Video Best Practices

- When targeting our social media platforms, videos should be kept in the 2-3-minute range for maximum effectiveness.
- Some videos (e.g. an astronaut interview) may work well at a longer run time, depending on pacing and the content. Targeting shorter is always the right goal, but longer options are possible, and should be discussed with the team. For example, a single 5-7 minute video may be more effective with the audience than breaking it up into three 2-minute videos.
- In general, music should be energetic and dramatic to help "drive" the piece. Avoid mid-tempo, non-dynamic tracks with a "hold music" or "waiting room" feel. Music should be more than an additional texture to fill up the audio space. It's a part of the dramatic storytelling.

- Modern, sans-serif fonts with a flat design are encouraged. Avoid, “chunky” fonts with a dated look. Make size, color and other adjustments as needed for readability.
- Most of our audience is on social platforms and mobile devices. Content should be produced to work on the small screen (e.g., readable text) and, when it fits the style and tone of the piece, should be audio-independent, with text on screen for those watching with no sound.
- A further note on “audio independence” – it does not mean “open captions” with every word on screen. The idea is to convey information to those watching with sound off, but also should be done in a way that enhances the video and does not distract from interviews, soundbites, etc. We are still an audio/visual medium and should be using all of our tools. Videos should be watched and heard, not only “read”
- Vertical video for social platforms is encouraged. Ideally, such projects are planned with vertical in mind from the beginning as it’s harder
- As audiences and platforms evolve, there may be opportunities to create long-form (30 minutes or more) videos, both for NASA Television and third-party streaming platforms like Hulu, Netflix, etc. Given the resources involved, these should be carefully coordinated and planned in advance to ensure maximum return on investment.
- Producers are encouraged to create video in the highest-resolution possible, up to 4K and 8K, for posting online. *The 720p format required for broadcast should not limit resolution on other platforms.*
- All videos should close with the NASA “meatball” insignia, not center, project or program graphics. “Explore” branding can be used in rare cases when appropriate but should always be paired with one of the six communications themes. Never use “Explore” without a theme. *Note: Explore branding is no longer required to close videos.*
- Videos specific to lunar exploration can end with the Artemis logo and meatball.
- More info: Video Best Practices from Social Media Team

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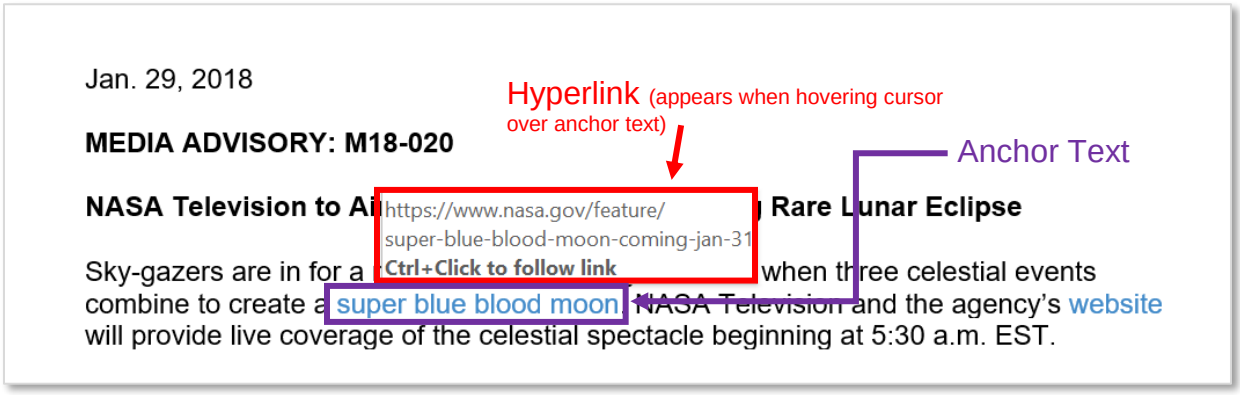
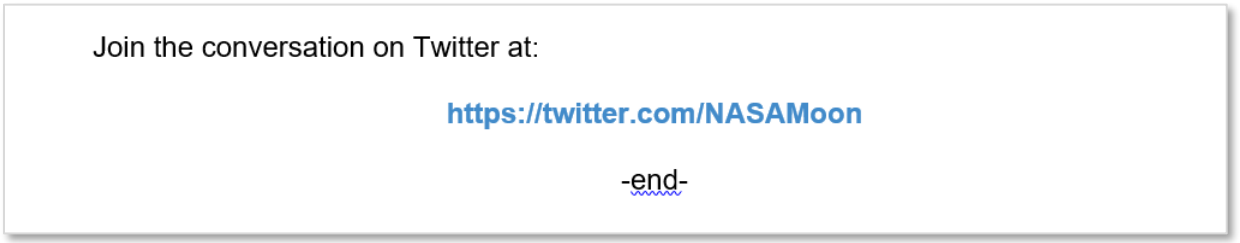
Hyperlinks and URLs

A **URL** (Uniform Resource Locator) is an address that specifies the location of a resource on the internet (example: https://www.nasa.gov), whereas a **hyperlink**, or link, is a word or words (called anchor text) within content that links to other related web content (example: hyperlink to NASA website).

HYPERLINK



vs. URL



- Put the call to action up high in the document. In the first image above, the call to action is to encourage readers to watch NASA's coverage and links (anchor text is "website") to the viewing location online (hyperlink is https://www.nasa.gov/live).
- When selecting anchor text, choose text that contains a keyword (or keywords) that is relevant to the linked content. Anchor text should not include more than three words, unless it is a proper name.
- Taking the entire product into consideration, determine what the overarching topic is. Then, provide a URL at the bottom of the product for more information on that topic. For example, if the product is an advisory for television coverage of a spacewalk at the International Space Station –

  For more information on the International Space Station, go to:

  https://www.nasa.gov/station

- When deciding where to add hyperlinks in your product, read it from the viewpoint of a layperson to identify areas where a reader may want more information.
- An article with no links is essentially a dead end for readers. Consider linking to a recent progress article (if available and relevant), as well as an agency big-picture theme page as part of relevant messaging. Please also note that adding links into a draft saves time during the review process so that reviewers do not have to find and recommend links.
- Be judicious with links. Too many will not only overwhelm your readers, but can actually harm search engine optimization (SEO). Link spamming is considered a deceptive SEO practice and can result in a site, or a news release, being penalized by search engines and bumped off a results page.
    - Hyperlinks – the average media product should have three to six.
    - URLs – the average media product should have one to three URLs at the bottom.

Past practice for NASA media products has been to remove the hyperlinks from URLs – meaning you cannot access the linked content by clicking on the URL. This is no longer required.

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Best Practices for Communications Products

NASA's Office of Communications has made great strides in identifying best practices for communications products through metrics and analysis collected and performed internally and by service providers, such as PR Newswire. We have focused the last couple years on improving high-impact elements of NASA's communications products – headlines, leads, quotes, hyperlinks and URLs. The following are the collected best practices in these areas that, if followed, are likely to have considerable and immediate impact on the reach and reception of our work.

Headlines

- Make them short, searchable and shareable. Anything beyond 60 characters may be invisible to search engines.
- Include the most critical keywords.
- Give enough information to let readers know what it's about, but leave them wanting more. Too much detail doesn't leave a reason to click. Shoot for somewhere in the middle.
- Too cute or creative may not tell readers what project/program/mission it's about.
- Not every headline needs "NASA" in it. Most, but not all. If it doesn't, then NASA should be somewhere in the lead paragraph.

Leads

- Straightforward, factual leads work well for major news developments – e.g., NASA's Curiosity rover has found water on Mars.
- Avoid technical/industry jargon and "NASA-speak."
- For web articles, a "just-the-facts" lead doesn't give the reader a reason to keep going. Look for creative, indirect ways to set the scene, paint a picture or otherwise "back into" the story. This is also an opportunity to hit the "so what" more immediately before getting into the specifics. Articles on incremental processing milestones especially benefit from this, because you can start by pointing out what the thing will do or how it fits into the broader goal, and then move on to the specifics of what part arrived where, etc.

Quotes

- Use quotes to add additional details and positive opinions about an event, person or object to make a strong point.
- Good quotes emphasize the significance of the activity in plain language.
- Avoid simply setting up or repeating the content that precedes or follows the quote. Try having a casual conversation about the topic with the person quoted to get a quote that sounds like real speech, or try speaking it aloud as you write it to test if it sounds like something you (or anyone) would ever say. Most readers can easily spot a quote that doesn't reflect how people actually talk.

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Social Media Guidance & Terminology

NASA's Office of Communications does not have a specific social media policy. We take the view social media is a medium (like the web, email, TV, etc.) where the message and content are what matter.

Instead, we apply existing rules, guidelines and policies employees already are familiar with, such as:

- NASA Policy on the Release of Information to News and Information Media
- NPD 2540.1, Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Including Information Technology
- NPR 2810.1, Security of Information Technology
- Chapter 11, Section 3.9, Internet Publishing Content Requirements
- NPD 2810.1, NASA Information Security Policy
- NPR 1600.1, NASA Security Program Procedural Documents, Section 5.24 Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) Controlled Information
- NM 1382-42, NASA Principles and Policies on Scientific Openness

NASA's Office of the Chief Information Officer has issued social media guidelines to help employees who are using social media.

Guidelines for Use

NASA has been on the forefront within the federal government in utilizing social media and Web 2.0 technologies. We've embraced the use of these technologies to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of the agency's mission. By openly sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned, we can provide more effective solutions and efficiencies to enhance mission excellence.

As such, this website provides NASA guidance on the use of social media technologies, including, but not limited to, photo and video sharing, wikis, blogs, podcasts, web feeds, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn), microblogging (e.g., Twitter), and other web-based forums. Use of social media technologies in an official capacity is covered by existing NASA regulations and policies on information accessibility, records management, privacy, security, information quality, and release of information to news and information media.

NASA employees and contractors are reminded that they remain accountable for responsible, safe and judicious use of these technologies, whether in an official or personal capacity. When using social media technologies to discuss NASA and its activities in their personal capacities, NASA employees shall clearly identify personal communications and personal opinion (versus agency) and include a disclaimer such as

“The statements and opinions posted by me are my own and do not necessarily represent NASA's positions, strategies or opinions.” Also, NASA employees and contractors should not use NASA identifiers, including the NASA Insignia ("meatball"), mission patches, or program identifiers in connection with any personal communications or non-official representation. Finally, NASA managers and supervisors have the discretion to restrict personal use of social media technologies by employees during duty hours.

- Know and follow NASA rules and regulations as stated in the policies above.
- Act responsibly – Think before posting. Even if a comment can be removed from a site, once it is posted it can be preserved by others and reposted.
- Unless you are officially representing NASA as a spokesperson (official use), do not represent yourself as speaking for NASA.
- Be yourself – Use the first person and speak for yourself, not for NASA.
- Identify yourself – State your name and role when you discuss your work.
- Write what you know – Stick to sharing facts and opinions about your areas of expertise.
- You are personally responsible for the content you publish on blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media.
- Be honest and transparent – Truth and sarcasm look the same on paper. The best way to make sure that you convey a truthful message is to be true.
- Be professional and respectful at all times.
- Contribute, engage, get involved – The unique value of social media is to interact with others by commenting, replying, giving feedback and letting your voice be heard. Without it, you're just broadcasting.
- Maintain and update content to ensure accurate and timely information.
- Correct and acknowledge mistakes – You might know that something you stated was not quite right, and have corrected yourself. But do others?
- Obey copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Be prepared to spend time providing answers and responses to questions posed by the public. If the questions wander outside the bounds of your expertise, politely decline and/or refer them to the Public Inquiries group in the Office of Communications at hq-public-inquiries@nasa.gov.
- Any online communication regarding NASA financial data is strictly forbidden except via official NASA processes.
- Information such as NASA's or a contractor's intellectual property, trade secrets, ITAR, Sensitive But Unclassified and customer data are strictly forbidden from any online discourse except by authorized personnel in accordance with the specific NASA external communications process.
- Don’t use a public social media service for a NASA-related activity or discussion that is not meant for total public access. If the topic is not for release to the public, use an internal social media tool.

- For reasons of liability, do not participate in any type of personal recommendation of another individual related to employment considerations. Follow NASA policy and refer all communication of this type to Human Resources for verification.
- Don’t provide any type of endorsement of a product or company for reasons of liability. Follow NASA policy and refer all communication of this type to the Office of General Counsel for verification.
- Violation of NASA policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination or other intervention.
- Don't blog proprietary or privileged information. Don't assume you can "tweet" or blog the meeting you just attended. Ask the meeting leader.
- Don't cite or reference clients, partners or suppliers without their approval. When you do make a reference, link back to the source where possible.
- Don't use social media to release NASA "news." News can be any previously "unreleased information with the potential to generate significant media, or public interest or inquiry." This includes, but is not limited to, mission results, findings and images. Only official spokespeople are authorized to speak for NASA in an official capacity regarding NASA policy, programmatic, and budget issues. When in doubt, ask a public affairs officer.
- Don't forget your day job. You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job commitments. Your manager does have the right to limit the use of social media at work.

For additional information and guidance, contact your center’s social media lead or the agency’s social media leadership found at https://www.nasa.gov/connect/social_media_contacts.html.

Obtaining an Official Account

Official social media accounts are recognized and registered accounts with the Office of Communications, the Office of the CIO, and the Office of the General Counsel. They are followed or liked by the @NASA Twitter account, the NASA Facebook page, and the NASA Instagram account, among others.

Officially recognized accounts are offered the following:

1) Use of the NASA logo or name
2) Use of the word “official”
3) Ability to get a verified account, if available and at the discretion of the third-party platform
4) Listing on the NASA.gov Connect page
5) Be followed or liked by the NASA flagship accounts
6) Having advertising and other limits removed on accounts, depending on the platform
7) Insurance that the NASA Social Media team won’t mistakenly report your account for a terms of service violation as impersonating NASA

To request and register a new official social media account at NASA, please visit this site to begin the process: http://communications.nasa.gov/socialmedia/request-account

Style Guidelines

Other Accounts/Sources

- Try to reference another account, when appropriate and available, in any message we share.
- When possible, reference the account mid-message as opposed to the end.

Dates and Times

- Avoid describing dates in relative terms such as today, tomorrow, next quarter, next year or soon unless describing a participatory event that the public can watch, take part in or participate. Use absolute dates instead on all mission updates or other news.
- For times on Twitter, use am and pm styled as lowercase, no periods and no space between the number and time of day. (e.g., 3pm EST, 10am CST). On platforms where length is not an issue, use a space and periods. (e.g., 3 p.m. EST, 10 a.m. CDT).
- Specify time zones when writing about an event or something else people would need to schedule.
- For US-based time zones, abbreviate to two letters with no periods for brevity's sake on Twitter (e.g., EST, CST, MST, PST). On platforms that allow more space, use the full three letter abbreviation (e.g., EST, EDT, etc).
- When space allows, include UTC time to allow easier conversion of times. Do not use GMT, as it is not a NASA standard.
- Avoid showing times at a 24 hour clock when possible.
- Use a dash between times (e.g., 2pm-4pm EST). Only include the time zone once at the end.
- For days of the week, abbreviate using AP style abbreviations in all instances at just three letters and no periods. (e.g., Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun)
- When space does not allow a day of the week, reference the month and date as using AP style abbreviations with no periods or for those months shorter than 5 letters, spell out. (e.g., Jan 1, Feb 3, Aug 19, Sept 3, Oct 24, Nov 16, Dec 28)
- Avoid using number only dates than can be misinterpreted in different parts of the world (e.g., 5/9).

Temperatures

- Use the degree symbol and the capital F abbreviation for Fahrenheit on all posts. (e.g., 98°F)
- Add a second temperature in Celsius, if room allows. (e.g., 23°C)

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Credits

- Use “Credit: NASA/entity” whenever possible.
- For brevity on Twitter, you might decide to use “h/t @username” (with “h/t” meaning “hat tip”), “via @username” or simply mention that user name at some point in the Tweet.
- On Instagram, an alternate method would be to use the camera emoji (“📷: @username”) to give credit to the appropriate person.

Emojis

- Emojis are a fun way to add humor and visual interest to your writing, but use them infrequently and deliberately. Be aware of the connotations associated with the emojis included in your social media posts.

Punctuation

- Use a colon and a space before a link.
- An exclamation point or question mark (followed by a single space) can also introduce a link:
- Use a single exclamation point to signal excitement.
- In VERY RARE instances (major celebrity appearances, top awards, international recognition, etc.) multiple exclamation points may be used (but think judiciously about whether the situation warrants more than one).
- Use an ellipsis (three periods, no spaces) to show where something has been omitted (as in a quote that’s been shortened) OR (in rare instances) to signal suspense.
- Em dashes can be used to set off various parts of a sentence.
- How To: To make an em dash (–) on a Mac, hold down SHIFT+OPTION+hyphen. NEVER use a hyphen (-) instead of an em dash. No spaces before or after the em dash.
- Ampersands (&) should only be used in running text of a post when needed for brevity.
- Percentage (%) symbols should be used in all instances on social media posts.

Voice/Tone

- Use first- and second-person language ("we" and "you") and contractions when appropriate. You are speaking as NASA when you post to an official account.
- Use strong, vivid, purposeful language, including active verbs. Look for verbs tied to physical action, for example: lift, build, spearhead, capture, drive and hone. Look for verbs and adjectives that include some emotional connotation or evoke a strong mental image.
- Use words that are clear and straightforward, without jargon or wordiness. The most concise method of stating something is often the most powerful.

  - (i.e. – Instead of "we are accomplishing improvement outcomes," use "we are improving." Instead of "Fees and payments shall not be accepted from payers or debtors prior to 10," use "We won't accept payments before 10.")
- Use active voice instead of passive.
  - (e.g., "We provide employees," instead of "employees are provided with.")
- Avoid cliché and vagueness, instead finding fresh language and metaphors.
  - (e.g., the phrase "Our cutting-edge program is pushing the envelope and thinking outside the box," is built on phrases that have been overused to the point where they are flat and meaningless. Instead, bring in specific factual detail that demonstrates your point, like "Our program, the first in the world to use X technology, urges employee to find new applications for everyday tools." Alternately, you can look for creative new language to articulate the idea. "Our program investigates hardware that's years ahead of the market and encourages employees to see their world through the lens of new technology.")
- Engage the audience in conversation. Feel comfortable asking your audience open-ended questions. And always welcome questions and feedback from the audience.
- Be helpful, thoughtful and optimistic

Social Media Best Practices

Before you hit the publish/post button or send an update, think about what you want to post. To do right by your audience, to deliver the utmost value and receive the maximum engagement, there are a handful of qualifications that every social media post should meet.

Did you make the most of your post text?
We've found that the most valuable content on social media–the content that gets the most interactions, engagement, and virality – is either educational or entertaining. Consider these questions to figure out if it is either:

- Is your content interesting enough that users want to share it and post about it?
- Will anyone really care about this content besides you or an internal stakeholder?
- If you were to see this post in your social media timeline, would you pause to read or reshare?
- Does your post add value for the reader?

In many ways, you need to speak the language of your followers, and not your internal stakeholders. Consider your audience when drafting posts by asking yourself:

- Will you be okay with absolutely anyone seeing this? Does it need to even be a social media post? Is this the best way to get this message in front of the audience it is intended for?

- Is this post too vague? Will everyone understand what I'm saying?
- Is this post too technical? Will the only people who understand it have a Ph.D. in the field?
- Am I using acronyms, abbreviations or insider jargon in this post?

Always assume readers don't know anything about NASA, as even if someone is following your account, it could be shared with someone who doesn't. So, for example: don't just assume that "SLS" is known. Write it such that it's "SLS, our new and powerful rocket".

Consider how your social media post will look in someone's feed independent of it appearing on our account.

- Does the post stand-alone? Is it self-explanatory?
- Are followers able to walk away having learned enough to understand the topic?
- Is it actionable for those wanting to dive deeper into a topic? Does it have a link for more information?

Avoid making common mistakes in your social media posts.

- Is everything spelled correctly? Does the post have proper grammar?
- Is the link *accurate*? Does it click through to where you intended?
- Is the link *appropriate* for the message of your social media post? Is it to a too-generic page, rather than the specific subject matter of your post?
- Is your hashtag usage appropriate? Will your use of a hashtag make your post part of a bigger conversation? Is your hashtag only used by you as a branding element?
- Are the page tags correct? Do not assume accounts have the same username across multiple platforms? (e.g., @ISS and @Space_Station)

Another way to look at this: Can anything be added or removed to make the message stronger to your audience?

Did you make the most of visual content (e.g., images, video and slides)?
Video is now the king of social media. Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram all support native uploading/on-demand video directly and many amplify native video over embedded links to videos on other platforms. Video posts are now outperforming images 3 to 1 when averaged across many of our channels, especially on Facebook, where the algorithms give it priority in peoples' feeds.

- Think Mobile. These days, more social media posts are viewed on the three-inch screen than on a computer. How will this look on a 3 inch screen?
- Think Short and Tight: Videos with higher numbers of views are rather short. Attention Spans are short. Will people start watching and tune out before I tell them what I want them to know?

- Think Muted: More than two-thirds of video watched on social media never has the sound turned on. Is the video at least closed captioned to be 508 compliant? Is all the information being talked about on audio also available visually?
- Think About the Start: Video starts automatically playing in peoples timelines on Facebook & Twitter. The first 10 seconds are the most critical of a video and should be extremely visually compelling – not bumpers, logos, talking heads. If scrolling through a feed with material from lots of accounts, what would make you stop & watch?
- Think Inside the Box: Are all of your titles and captions going to be readable on a small screen? On Instagram, will it all fit inside of a square?

Images are the second most important factor in optimal social media content. If you can't get a video element, consider including a visually-compelling image. Will the image work on its own without needing to add branding, text, or other elements to it? Shareables with branding and text overlays on them are now among the least shared content across NASA. Shareables as ads for events with calls-to-action still have purpose, but shareables for non-call-to-action materials are no longer working.

If there's a way to work in visuals, it's likely to increase the success of your message.

Are you ready to post?
Sometimes, it's good to pause and reflect on a post. Is the post a knee-jerk reaction to something? If it's real-time, did I take a moment to pause and re-read (or, better yet, have someone else read it) before publishing?

It's easy to think that your thing is the most important thing in the world. Maybe it is the newsmaker of the day and everyone on the internet is talking about it. But, more often than not, it isn't. Right-size your posts so you don't wind up spamming your followers or appear tone deaf to the larger world around you. And if you don't have content, don't feel compelled to just make stuff up. Post when you have news. Your followers will continue to follow you through quieter periods.

Conclusion
Working from these tips can be a helpful way to ensure the utmost quality for each post that goes out.

When posting, consider some of the following:

- Is the message valuable for my audience?
- Is everything correct – e.g., voice, URL, page tags, hashtags, emojis, spelling and length?
- How many times have I posted already today?
- Did I make the most of visuals to help tell the story?
- How reactionary is this message? Would I be okay with absolutely anyone seeing it?

- Is this content timely and newsworthy?
- Is my post clear, concise and understandable to a sixth grader, as well as a 65 year old?

If you have any questions about best practices on social media, please consult all of the documentation at http://communications.nasa.gov/socialmedia or email the social media team at hq-socialmedia@lists.nasa.gov.

Parts of this are adopted from a Buffer blog post authored by Kevan Lee.

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Terminology

360 video/360 image
360-degree videos and images, are assets where a view in every direction is recorded at the same time. During playback the viewer has control of the viewing direction like a panorama.

AddThis
AddThis is a social bookmarking service that provides a code users can put on their websites so that when people visit that site, they have the option to share via Facebook, Twitter, etc. Its analytics service can show you which pages are trending, where people are interacting with your brand, and what they're saying about your content on Twitter.

AI
Intelligence exhibited by machines (i.e., artificial intelligence). The role of AI in humans' everyday lives is increasing exponentially, from chat bots on your favorite retailer's website to Alexa learning to recognize your voice commands over time. (I, for one, welcome our new robot overlords.)

algorithm
A rules-based procedure for making calculations or solving problems – they're everywhere in computer science! In social media, constantly shifting algorithms control which content its users see (and don't), as well as what topics and hashtags are trending.

AMA
Short for "Ask Me Anything"On Reddit, an acronym for "ask me anything." In an AMA post, a user will answer questions posed by the Reddit community.

avatar
A small thumbnail image used as an icon to virtually represent the user on their account

bio
The small portion of any digital profile that tells new or prospective followers who you are. All social platforms offer space to write a bio. It's the first thing users see when they discover your profile, and a good one can greatly improve how often you show up in keyword searches.

Bit.ly
Bit.ly is a free URL shortening service that provides statistics for the links users share online. Bit.ly is popularly used to condense long URLs to make them easier to share on social networks such as Twitter. go.nasa.gov is "Powered by Bit.ly."

Bitmoji
Customized avatars that can be added to Gmail, Messenger, Slack, and social media networks. Bitmoji lets you create an animated representation of yourself then offers a

variety of versions of it in different situations that you can share with an app or smartphone keyboard extension.

blogosphere
the larger blogging community made up of many different bloggers across different platforms and blogging services

bookmarking
Bookmarking online follows the same idea of placing a bookmark in a physical publication – you're simply marking something you found important, enjoyed, or where you left off to continue reading later. Social bookmarking is usually happening through websites using one of the various bookmarking services available, such as StumbleUpon.

campaign
An online campaign is a set of coordinated marketing messages, delivered at intervals, with a specific goal, such as raising awareness for a cause or candidate or increasing sales of a product.

chatbot
A type of bot that live in messaging apps (such as Facebook Messenger) and use artificial intelligence to perform tasks via simulated conversation. A chatbot can be used for customer service, data collection, and more. Facebook is one of the leaders in chatbot integration.

clickbait
Social and web content with misleading or sensationalist headlines that entices readers to click through to the full story. Clickbait’s goal is usually to generate pageviews and engagement.

cloud computing
Cloud computing (also called “the cloud”) refers to the growing phenomenon of users who can access their data from anywhere rather than being tied to a particular machine.

Creative Commons
Creative Commons generally refers to a not-for-profit licensing system that offers creators the ability to fine-tune their copyright, spelling out the ways in which others may use their works.

embed/embedding
The act of adding code to a website so that a video or photo can be displayed while it’s being hosed at another site. Many users now watch embedded YouTube videos or see Flickr photos on blogs rather than on the original site.

emoji
Emoji refers to small pictures used on smartphones, tablets, and other electronic devices to convey emotion or represent an object or symbol more succinctly than a text

statement. Emojipedia is a helpful resource to learn the meanings behind emoji before using them in social content.

engagement
Talking to, messaging, or otherwise interacting with other people on social networks. Engagement broadly encompasses many types of actions, from commenting on Instagram posts to producing a Facebook Live show with an open Q&A. Engagement is central to any social media strategy.

ephemeral content
Content that vanishes after a set amount of time (such as Snaps and Instagram Stories).

Facebook
To place content onto Facebook is to "post." Don't use Facebooking as a verb.

Facebook Live
Facebook Live offers live-streaming video capabilities with the option for real-time follower interaction. Followers get a notification when your page goes Live. As they watch, they can respond with emotion emojis as well as ask questions in the comments section. Facebook Live videos stay on your page indefinitely.

fair use
Fair use is a doctrine in U.S. law that permits limited use of copyrighted material without obtaining the permission of the copyright holder, such as use for scholarship or review. Fair use is delineated in Section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Code.

feed
A web feed or RSS feed is a format that provides users with frequently updated content. Content distributors syndicate a web feed, enabling users to subscribe to a site's latest content. By using a news reader to subscribe to a feed, you can read the latest posts or watch the newest videos on your computer or portable device on your own schedule. Alternately, a feed may refer to a timeline or newsfeed. See timeline.

filter
A photographic effect that can be applied to images before publishing them, from simple black-and-white or sepia to ubiquitous flower crowns and puppy ears. Available on Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, and many other apps with camera integrations, the popularity of filters has resulted in the hashtag #nofilter, a proud declaration that your latest photo is unedited.

flash mob
A flash mob is a group of individuals who gather and disperse with little notice for a specific purpose through text messages, social media or viral emails. It's now generally considered a somewhat dated term.

Flickr
Flickr is an image hosting service and video hosting service.

friends
Specifically, Facebook friends. These are individuals you consider to be friendly enough with you to see your Facebook profile and engage with you.

GIF
An acronym for Graphics Interchange Format, which refers to a file format that supports both static and animated images. GIFs rose to popularity as a way to react on social media without words.

geotagging
Geotagging is the process of adding location-based metadata to media such as photos, video or online maps.

hashtag
A word or phrase preceded by the “#” sign. Hashtags are a simple way to mark the topic (or topics) of social media messages and make them discoverable to people with shared interests. On most social networks, clicking a hashtag will reveal recently published messages with that hashtag. Hashtags first emerged on Twitter as a user-created phenomenon and are now used on almost every other social media platform.

header image
A header image refers to the large photo displayed at the top of a social media profile. The header image is also commonly referred to as the banner image on LinkedIn or the cover image on Facebook.

influencer
A social media user who can reach a relevant audience (whether large or small) and create awareness about a trend, topic, company, or product. They have established credibility with their audiences, and marketers work to build relationships with them in order to reach those audiences.

Instagram/Instagram Live/Instagram story
Instagram is a photo sharing application that lets users take photos, apply filters to their images, and share the photos instantly on the Instagram network and other social networks like Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and Foursquare.

iOS
Refers to Apple device software popular on the iPhone and iPad. Used generically to parallel Android devices – e.g., available for Android and iOS mobile devices.

Like
A “Like” is an action that can be made by a Facebook user. Instead of writing a comment for a message or a status update, a Facebook user can click the "Like" button as a quick way to show approval and share the message. When referring to taking action, “Like” should be capitalized.

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lurker
A lurker online is a person who reads discussions on a message board, newsgroup, social network, or other interactive system, but rarely or never participates in the discussion.

meme
A piece of media such as a photo with text overlay, often humorous, that spreads rapidly through the internet.

microblogging
microblogging is the act of broadcasting short messages to other subscribers of a web service.

open source
In its strict sense, open source refers to software code that is free to build upon. But open source has taken on a broader meaning – such as open source journalism and open source politics – to refer to the practice of collaboration and free sharing of media and information to advance the public good. Well-known open-source projects include the Linux operating system, the Apache web server and the Firefox browser.

Periscope
Periscope is a social video app that allows users to broadcast live video from wherever they are. App users also have the ability to engage with others videos, browse live or recent broadcasts, and follow users to receive notifications.

permalink
A permalink is the direct link to a specific blog entry that is intended to be permanent and unchanging.

Pinterest/pin board
Pinterest is a social network that allows users to visually share, and discover new interests by posting (known as “pinning” on Pinterest) images or videos to their own or others' boards (i.e. a collection of “pins,” usually with a common theme) and browsing what other users have pinned.

platform
Platform is the framework or system that runs software and presents content. WordPress, for example, is a service that serves as a platform for a community of blogs. In a larger context, the Internet is becoming a platform for applications and capabilities, using cloud computing.

podcast
A podcast is a digital file (usually audio but sometimes video) made available for download to a portable device or personal computer for later playback. A podcast also refers to the show that comprises several episodes. A podcast uses a feed that lets you subscribe to it so that when a new audio clip is published online, it arrives on your digital doorstep right away.

public domain
A work enters the public domain when it is donated by its creator or when its copyright expires. A work in the public domain can be freely used in any way, including commercial uses.

QR code
Stands for quick response code – it is a barcode that a mobile device can scan to quickly hyperlink a user to an online product or website. A QR reader is employed to scan the barcode.

Reddit
A popular social networking site where users upvote (positive) or downvote (negative) user-submitted content, from videos and image-based memes to text posts. The most upvoted and commented-on posts appear higher up on the website's main page, as well as on its many topic-focused sections called subreddits.

RSS
Really Simple Syndication, sometimes called web feeds, is a web standard for the delivery of content (e.g., blog entries, news stories, headlines, images, video) enabling readers to stay current with favorite publications or producers without having to browse from site to site.

screencast
A screencast is a video that captures what takes place on a computer screen, usually accompanied by audio narration. A screencast is often created to explain how a website or piece of software works, but it can be any piece of explanatory video that strings together images or visual elements.

selfie
Used to describe a type of self-portrait image, typically taken with a hand-held digital camera or camera phone.

short code
A short code is a mobile shortcut – a telephone number consisting of four to six digits that makes it easier for subscribers to vote, subscribe to a service, order ringtones and the like via SMS (e.g., text HAITI to 90999 in order to contribute to the Red Cross's relief efforts).

smart phone
A smart phone is a handheld device capable of advanced tasks beyond those of a standard mobile phone. Capabilities might include email, chat, taking photos or video or hundreds of other tasks.

SMS
SMS stands for Short Message Service, a system that allows the exchange of short text-based messages between mobile devices. Use text message or text when possible.

Snapchat/Snapchat story
Allows users to string together multiple videos and images to tell a story to followers. Preferred in the vertical format. Clips are typically 10 seconds in length and stay live for 24 hours before they disappear.

social/Social
Can be used as an adverb for an event taking place on a social media platform, but also be an in-person event for NASA's social media followers (used as a reference to a proper name, use "Social"). Used in the plural, it can refer to attendees of a NASA Social ("socials," or "socialites").

social bookmarking
Social bookmarking is a method by which users locate, store, organize, share and manage bookmarks of web pages without being tied to a particular machine. Users store lists of personally interesting Internet resources and usually make these lists publicly accessible. Delicious is the best-known social bookmark site.

social media
Social media are works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment, such as a blog, podcast, forum, wiki or video hosting site. More broadly, social media refers to any online technology that lets people publish, converse and share content online.

social media optimization
Social Media Optimization (SMO) is a set of practices for generating publicity through social media, online communities and social networks. The focus is on driving traffic from sources other than search engines, though improved search ranking is also a benefit of successful SMO.

social networking
Social networking is the act of socializing in an online community. A typical social network allows you to create a profile, add friends, communicate with other members and add your own media.

story
Only meant to refer to vertical video and still content shot using mobile devices for sharing for a 24-hour period before it becomes inaccessible to users. Can refer to a Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook or YouTube story.

tag cloud
A tag cloud is a visual representation of the popularity of the tags or descriptions that people are using on a blog or website. Popular tags are often shown in a large type and less popular tags in smaller type.

tags
Tags are keywords added to a blog post, photo or video to help users find related topics or media, either through browsing on the site or as a term to make your entry more relevant to search engines.

terms of service
Terms of service (TOS) are the legal basis upon which you agree to use a website, video hosting site or other place for creating or sharing content. Check before agreeing to concede the rights the site owners may claim over your content.

thread
A string of messages that make up a conversation. Threads begin with an initial message and then continue as a series of replies or comments. Threads are essential to most forms of online communication, including social media (e.g. Twitter threads) and email.

timeline
Timeline is the Facebook format for personal profiles. It is essentially a digital scrapbook of a user's life, displaying their profile in an actual timeline format so they can see at exactly what point in time something a story occurred. Capitalize Timeline when referring to the Facebook feature.

trend
A trend is seen on every social network. Facebook shows what is trending when multiple users are sharing the same link or discussing the same topic. Twitter has a section to the bottom right of its home feed which clearly shows what topics and hashtags are trending in tweets. And LinkedIn shows what industries (in LinkedIn Today) that a certain story is popular.

troll
In internet slang, a troll is someone who posts controversial, inflammatory, irrelevant or off-topic messages in an online community, such as an online discussion forum or chat room, with the primary intent of provoking other users into an emotional response or to generally disrupt normal on-topic discussion.

Tumblr
Tumblr is a microblogging platform that allows users to post text, images, video, audio, links, and quotes to their blog. Users can also follow other blogs and repost other users' content to their own blog.

tweet
A post on Twitter, a real-time social messaging system. To publish content on Twitter, use “tweet” as a verb.

URL
Stands for Universal Resource Locator. Avoid use. Use web address or website.

user-generated content
Often abbreviated UGC, user-generated content is an industry term that refers to all forms of user-created materials such as blog posts, reviews, podcasts, videos, comments and more.

unconference
An unconference is collaborative learning event organized and created for its participants by its participants. BarCamp is an example of a well-known unconference.

videoblog
A videoblog is a blog that contains video-only entries. Also called a vlog, video podcast, or vodcast.

viral
Viral is a term used to describe an instance in which a piece of content – YouTube video, blog article, photo, etc. – achieves noteworthy awareness. Viral distribution relies heavily on word of mouth and the frequent sharing of one particular piece of content all over the internet.

virtual world
A virtual world is an online computer-simulated space, such as Second Life, which mimics aspects of real life with fantasy elements. Typically, you can create a representation of yourself (an avatar) and socialize with other residents for free, though you can also buy currency (using real money) to purchase land and trade with other residents. Second Life is being used by some nonprofits and businesses to run discussions, virtual events and fundraising.

webcast
A webcast refers to a live or delayed audio or video broadcast. Webcasting refers to the ability to use the web to deliver live or delayed versions of audio or video broadcasts. Webcasts may be “interactive” (for example, users may rewind the show) whereas traditional broadcasting generally is not. Listeners may receive textual or visual data (artist and song titles, ads, album artwork, etc.) during a webcast.

webinar
Short for web-based seminar, a webinar is a presentation, lecture, workshop or seminar that is transmitted over the web. In general, participants register in advance and access the presentation in real time over the Internet and listen to the presenter either through computer speakers or a telephone connection. Webinars are generally one-way and can involve chat or polls. There are a large number of companies that offer webinar services.

WhatsApp
A free to download messenger app for smartphones. WhatsApp uses the internet to send messages, images, audio or video.

widget
A widget is an element of a graphical user interface that displays an information arrangement changeable by the user, such as a window or text box.

wifi
wifi stands for wireless fidelity, a simple system allowing enabled devices to connect to the Internet within short range of any access point without cables or adaptors.

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YouTube
A video sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips. It’s a good platform for placing how to guides, testimonials and information about your products and services.

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Commercial Partner Media Usage Rights

When NASA uses an image on Flickr that was provided by a commercial partner (Boeing, SpaceX, et al), certain language must accompany the image. Each company has different requirements, as listed below.

SpaceX
Copyright: Here is our public domain dedication.
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Rights Usage Terms: To the extent possible under law, www.spacex.com has waived all copyright and related or neighboring rights to this work. This work is published from the United States.

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